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ABSTRACT

A guide to various instructional technology (IT) approaches is aimed at modern language teachers who are just beginning to integrate IT into their methodology. Hints and suggestions are given about what questions to ask when acquiring a computer and buying software and how to avoid some problems. Chapters include the following: (1) Why should I?; (2) Which computer should I choose?; (3) Where do I start? (e.g., managing computers, options varying from single stand-alones to a network room available on the timetable); (4) What software should I buy? (e.g., word processing, concept keyboard, information retrieval, text manipulation, simulations, language work); (5) problems and pitfalls (e.g., disk management, time management, authoring problems, printing); (6) What else? (e.g., newspaper production, the European FAX Project, 1989). Lists of further sources of information and extra reading, as well as a glossary, are provided. (LB)

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Technology in Language Learnin

Making the Most of Micro-Computers

by Heather Rendall

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(*Series editor* Brian Hill)

Making the most of micro-computers

Heather Rendall

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3

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INTRODUCTION

Over the last ten years a large number of articles, books and guides on CALL has been written for the modern language teacher. Many of them highlight the good practice developed in establishments at all phases of education and much good methodology has been derived from them. However, for the debutant there often remain many fundamental and practical questions that have to be answered before the results of the work of the others can be acted upon.

In 1986 a joint BALT/MLA publication *CALL for the Computer* was produced that offered sound advice for the novice, much of which holds good to-day. However, in the intervening four years the rate of development and the spread of good practice has accelerated. New, more powerful machines with more sophisticated tools are now available: every year more computers appear in schools and the traditional competition between departments for their use is being eroded, thanks to the cross-curricular emphasis given to Information Technology (IT) by the National Curriculum: programs have developed away from the often criticised 'drill and practice' of the early years of CALL and fresh ideas for the integration of all types of programs and tools have been conceived in response to the language for **all** requirements, especially in Special Needs and in Key Stage 4.

The emphasis is now on a whole school IT policy in which modern language teachers are being asked to play a part. The integration of CALL is no longer the preserve of the enthusiast but an accepted methodology, tried and tested in the classroom.

The aim of *Making the most of micro-computers* is twofold:

★ to provide modern language teachers who have still to take their first steps in integrating IT into their methodology with a guide to various applications which could make useful starting points;

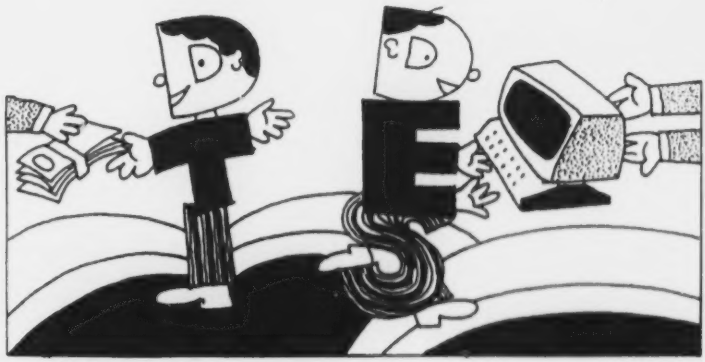
★ to give hints and suggestions about what questions to ask when acquiring a computer and buying software and how to avoid some of the problems that teachers may well face when starting out.

No guide can hope to be entirely comprehensive; the information gathered here is not meant to be exhaustive; it offers guidelines to follow, questions to ask and tackles the commonest problems met during the INSET experience of the author. There are also lists of further sources of information and extra reading, as well as a glossary of terms.

CHAPTER 1

Why should I?

It is now ten years since the Department of Trade and Industry's 'Micros in Schools' project was launched. At that time the micro-computer was still relatively untried and untested in primary and secondary schools. That its introduction would benefit pupils, teachers and the curriculum was not in doubt. Exactly what these benefits would be was less certain. With the rapid and, for some, bewildering escalation of uses of computer technology in all aspects of our every-day life, it was, however, clear that the new skills and knowledge being developed should be reflected in the educational programme.



The emphasis was initially on understanding the workings of the electronics, their possible applications and the programming needed to create programs. This led to the first computers coming into secondary schools being handed over for the (almost) exclusive use of the Maths and Science Departments and/or the newly formed Computer Departments, where until recently many of them have remained.

The 'Micros in primary schools' project 1982-85 saw a sudden rise in the amount of software being developed to stimulate good practice. The integration of the micro got underway and has continued to forge ahead under the auspices of MAPE. Word processors for infants, simulations to stimulate reading and problem solving, control techniques with robots, Desk Top Publishing - all these have become part of the primary school pupil's experience.

In 1981 the DES set up the 'Microelectronics in Education' programme which supported a wide range of applications for the computer and gave the 'enthusiast' in other curriculum disciplines the opportunity to develop software and ideas. By the time MEP funding ceased in 1986, a weather change had occurred. That the computer was a tool that could be put to good use in subjects across the curriculum was becoming clear.

Its successor, the Microelectronics Education Support Unit 1986-89 (now merged with NCET), appointed co-ordinators in all phases of education, in cross-curricular projects and single subjects. The Education Support Grant scheme that began in 1988

saw funding for LEA advisors also for all phases and for single subjects. And yet full integration of computers or Information Technology, as it was by now being called, was still patchy. Some LEAs had offered extensive central support. Others had left provision entirely to the individual schools. While some schools had made outstanding progress, others had progressed little from the provision and methods of the early '80s.

The situation is about to change. This year (March 1990) saw published the 'Technology in the National Curriculum' document. In it Information Technology is placed firmly and concretely across the curriculum. Skills are to be developed by each child from Year 1. Computers are seen as tools, whose use can enhance all aspects of education and whose application and the implications of those applications should be part and parcel of every discipline.

Modern languages and Information Technology

For modern language teachers Information Technology holds especially exciting new possibilities.

Accented word processors add a fresh dimension to writing. Languages using non-roman alphabets can be written and printed with ease. Databases can store 'pages' of authentic information and genuine sources of material abroad can even be accessed directly. Satellite transmissions may well within the next few years be sending not only pictures but exercises and work sheets direct from Europe.

A real attempt can be made to provide pupils with experience of 'languages at work' through simulations and programs used in businesses, giving them the chance to put into genuine practice the language that they had previously learnt in isolation.

The computer's ability to manipulate words on a screen has produced programs containing exercises and tasks that have never before been available to individual pupils.

Whether looking at the uses of the single computer in the classroom or a room full of computers, the possible applications within modern language teaching are innumerable and more and more good practice is being developed all the time. And with an ever increasing emphasis on active learning and group work, there is every prospect of this continuing.

Over the next few years all departments in secondary education will be asked how they can support and contribute to cross-curricular initiatives. For modern languages departments, as far as Information Technology is concerned, the answer should be a foregone conclusion. It will depend of course on provision and access to computers. But once that 'hurdle' is crossed, Information Technology has the ability to bring more than one new dimension into modern language teaching.

CHAPTER 2

Which computer do I choose?

The answer to this question should be simple - a machine that is compatible with other machines in your school and one that supports the kind of software you wish to use.

Unfortunately, it is likely that your school now has more than one type of computer - Acorn BBC, RM Nimbus, Amstrad, Apple Mac, IBM PC or compatible - which makes the decision more complicated. It is worth bearing the following points in mind:

1. Your access to a computer/computers will depend on the provision of computers within the school at present and its policy of further provision over the next few years. You will need to find out:

★ Which type of computer are you likely to get greatest access to?

★ Will the department be provided with just a single computer?

★ Will the department eventually have a computer in each of its teaching rooms?

★ Will the department have timetabled access to a room full of computers? And if so, will the computers be of the same type as those in the department?

2. There is little point in having a computer for which there is little or no modern languages software. This may seem like an obvious statement, but it is surprising how many times one hears of departments being offered machines which are either years out of date and for which no software exists, or which are the latest models in a new range and, therefore, still without software at the moment.

- Before you make any decision about a certain type of computer, check with the supplier or your IT co-ordinator that modern languages software exists for it - and at a price you can afford.

3. Somebody has to inherit the BBC computers from the former computer room that is about to be upgraded with brand new machines, and it is often individual departments who have the older machines passed on down to them. Many of the machines and their peripherals may still be functioning well, but the risk of unreliability with second-hand machines is obviously great. There is nothing more off-putting to the novice than to find that their 'new' machine 'crashes out' on them. Before you gratefully accept any offer of a computer, check the following:

- How old is the computer? Has it already seen long service in the school?
- Insist on running a variety of software through the computer and the disc drive. It is often the latter that needs a service.
- Make sure all the keys on the keyboard are functioning and can be pressed cleanly.

No-one likes to look a gift horse in the mouth, but more problems could arise than be solved if you are offered and accept a computer that is either too old and unreliable, or that is going to prove incompatible with other machines in the department or school.

4. A computer is not one thing; to harness its full potential certain peripherals must be seen as essentials. When offered a computer, you should make sure that the following questions are asked:

N.B. *Although the following is seen as applying specifically to the BBC computer, questions 3 and 4 apply to any computer being offered.*

★ Does it have a single or double disc drive? Is the disc drive 40/80 switchable?

★ Does it come with a TV or a monitor?

★ Does it have its own printer?

★ Does it come on a trolley?

Many school computers are still equipped with a single 40 track disc drive. Although there are many programs that work well off this, it is true to say that the moment you have a single 40 track disc drive, all you want is a double 40/80 switchable disc drive. Databasing, for example, becomes unnecessarily laborious without one. Copying files or making backups becomes a chore.

- Be prepared to insist on having at least one double disc drive in the department. State your reasons clearly: for ease of formatting, copying and backups, i.e. to be able to database efficiently.

In the early days of CALL, computers were attached to existing TVs via the RF aerial. Although this is perfectly feasible, the screen picture from a TV screen is more likely to roll, have shadows of colour washing across the screen or to produce some irritating unintentional flashing colour combinations. A monitor, on the other hand, is designed for the purpose, is connected via an RGB lead (no difficult acronym this! Red Green Blue = RGB) and produces a steady picture with static colours.

It is possible to buy a TV cum monitor - smaller ones, i.e. 14" screen, have an RGB connection. Larger screens, i.e. 21" +, use a SCART plug connection - but these sets are more expensive.

- If possible, insist on having a monitor + RGB connection.

- If, for reasons of economy, it is suggested that you double up on a TV and monitor, point out that a small screen which is suitable on a computer is unsuitable for video work. The reverse obviously applies to the larger screen TV/monitor.

- If you intend to use a single computer with a whole class and therefore need a large screen and only a TV is available, then use the RF aerial connection. But do run the program through first and make sure that there are no 'dazzling' colour combinations.

One of the most obvious uses of a micro for pupil and teacher alike is word processing, especially for modern language teachers now that we have a range of fully accented word processors. Without a printer a word processor is useless. A printer is not a luxury - for language work it is essential.

- Point out politely but firmly that you will not be able to maximise your use of a computer without a printer.

- Find out whether the printer offered has an international character set and ask to be shown where the dip switches are to access and change them, if need be (see p 47).

If you are not going to be provided with one computer per teaching room and your rooms are situated geographically within one area, then you may well have to move the computer between rooms in order to give other teachers access. A computer trolley answers this difficulty. Designed to hold everything you need - monitor, disc drive, printer and paper - it would also allow ease of storage for the computer in a stock cupboard or side room, if security is a problem that has to be addressed.

- A trolley may seem like asking for the 'cherry on the icing', but point out that it will allow the best possible use of resources between rooms and teachers and will prevent the machine and its peripherals from being constantly unplugged and moved around, which would only be detrimental in the long run.

5. Compatability of machines and software is unfortunately the greatest 'headache' anyone faces with computers in school and we will be referring to it time and again.

In an ideal situation all the computers to which you have access should be of the same type. This will permit the purchase of site licences or multi-user licences for any software you buy.

It is more realistic to suppose that you will have at least two different types of machines in school - BBC Bs or Masters in the classrooms and the newer, more powerful machines - Archimedes, RM Nimbus or a PC equivalent in computer/network rooms.

The copyright laws are clear in this situation; you are not allowed to use programs purchased for the one machine on the other, even if they can be made to work.

- If you are offered access to two different types of machines, make it clear that you will need a capitation for software that enables you to re-purchase the copyright of any software that you wish to use on both types of machine. There is no getting away from the fact that this can be an extremely expensive business.

Emulators that offer to run, for example, BBC programs on a Nimbus can only be used with either programs you have written yourself or files that you have produced for a word processor or a database. It is illegal to use them to run copyright programs purchased for a different machine.

- To avoid this situation, you could decide to purchase certain software for use in the classroom on one type of machine and other software for sole use in the computer/network rooms on the second type of machine.

This situation will be dealt with more thoroughly in the chapter on software applications. However, there are still a few ground rules that you need to consider, when at the stage of choosing a computer.

★ Will it be compatible with other machines you may be offered in the near future?

★ Will it be compatible with other machines in the school to which you will have access?

★ Will you be able to afford the type of software and tools needed out of your departmental budget? Most BBC and Nimbus software falls into a price range that permits purchase from capitation. However, if you are being offered PC (IBM compatible) machines, you will find that the initial purchase price could be double or triple that for the same software for a BBC or Nimbus.

6. If you are given a free choice as to what computer you choose, base your decision on available software.

- If you have a local IT centre or teachers' centre with a software library, book an appointment to see a variety of software running on different types of computers.

- If this facility is not available to you, arrange a visit to a school with existing modern language IT or apply for a place on a regional or national conference where you can see or have hands-on experience of software.

- Failing either of these alternatives, and taking as read that any information about software provision will probably be out of date before it is in print, you could always contact either CILT or, via your IT adviser, NCET and ask for the latest software lists for the different machines. The addresses can be found in the appendix.

CHAPTER 3

Where do I start?

There is no straightforward answer to this question. Whoever you ask is sure to give the same reply: it depends on what you want to do and that in turn depends on how many computers are available to you.

However, it is possible to describe the possible permutations of computer provision and then give an indication of the type of software and methodology which makes good or best use of that situation.

But before we discuss methodology and software, we need to consider the management of the machines themselves. Some teachers will have little or no problem with this; their classrooms have space enough for a trolley or a permanent work station; others will not be so fortunate, having already restricted space or cumbersome old furniture that does not lend itself to rearranging.

Managing computers

Your possible provision of computers may well fall into one or two of the categories below. Each of these situations brings its own advantages or possibly disadvantages.

The following information must not be seen as prescriptive. In fact, a number of the possible permutations mentioned might be available to you in your school, in which case you have the enviable choice of selecting methodology to suit your available access.

Possible provision
1. A single computer available from time to time
2. A single computer available all the time
3. A cluster of computers available from time to time
4. A cluster of computers available all the time
5. A room full of single stand-alones bookable on the timetable
6. A network room bookable on the timetable

N.B. *A single computer is usually referred to as a single stand-alone computer.*
A number (2, 3 or 4, etc) of single stand-alones which can be brought together at any one time are referred to as a cluster.
A number of computers, often without individual disc drives, connected to a file server in which a hard disc stores all the programs, are referred to as a network.

1. A SINGLE STAND-ALONE AVAILABLE FROM TIME TO TIME

The advice and examples that follow fit equally well to a situation where a non-departmental computer can be borrowed from time to time or where the department is provided with one permanent computer, that has to be shared between teaching rooms.

The decision that must be made is whether you are going to set up the computer in one room and bring classes to that room or whether the computer will be set up in individual rooms on a rota basis. The factors that must be considered are these:

- If the computer is on a trolley and the rooms are situated close together on one level, then the mobility of the machine is obvious and it can be brought in to each teaching room on a rota.

  Check the siting of plugs in each room. Can you place the computer where it will neither dominate the class nor be in the way?

- Whether the computer is on a trolley or not, if the teaching rooms are geographically dispersed (on different floors; with steps in between; in a different building) then the 'hassle' of moving the hardware is daunting. The best solution here would be to appoint one room the computer room and make it available as required to the rest of the department.

- If the teaching rooms are too small or have no convenient place to set up the micro, then the problem has to be tackled more fundamentally. Try moving desk/tables together as for group work, if not already so arranged, in order to create a space.

  Could you site the computer directly outside the door in the corridor? Would this inconvenience movements outside?

  Could space be made in an existing stock cupboard or workroom?

  The final resort is to set up the computer for this occasion on the teacher's desk.

2. A SINGLE STAND-ALONE AVAILABLE ALL THE TIME

Once you have managed to get your own computer permanently in your classroom, it

needs to become as much part of the furnishings as the cassette player or an OHP. Obviously the siting of power sockets is going to dictate its positioning.

- If a lack of sockets is a problem, remember you can purchase a trolley that includes a four-bar plug - allowing for all the hardware, i.e. computer, monitor, disc drive and printer - to be plugged in on the trolley while the lead from the four-bar plug plugs into just one wall socket. If you are working without a trolley, then a separate four-bar plug will be needed.

- If you can position the computer so that the screen is not directly facing the class, so much the better. Screens are tantalisingly attractive to pupils who will, given the opportunity, watch a screen rather than anything else.

- The best position is at the back of the room; then if you need to work *en classe,* rather than with individual pupils or groups, you can at least turn the whole class round to face the screen. At the same time, when pupils are on the machine singly or in groups, the rest of the class can be facing in the opposite direction and not be (totally) distracted.

- Remember to check that neither natural nor artificial light is going to shine directly onto the screen.

- Simple instructions to pupils (if needed) and an index of programs available can be put up on the wall. As you proceed further, you may like to have a chart, on which you can monitor use of the computer by classes. This will be of great advantage once cross-curricular skills in IT need to be monitored. The diagrams below give various examples.

Two classes' record of access to computers covering one month

CLASS	Week 1				Week 2				Week 3				Week 4			
FOLIO	✓	✓			✓				✓							
C.K	✓				✓				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
MLFIND	✓				✓	✓										
FUN WITH TEXTS	✓															
WORD SEQUENCING	✓				✓				✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	
QUELLE TÊTE																
JEU DES MÉNAGES																

The question of whether discs are left by the computer or stored safely in a cupboard until required has to be the individual school's decision. Some schools encourage out of lesson use of computers; others have to positively discourage it.

- Be prepared for an upsurge in interest from all levels of pupils once the computer is permanently there.

- Anticipate that pupils will want to *just finish off this exercise* or *just put in my corrections on the word processor*. Again, how you come to terms with this will depend entirely on your relationship with your pupils. You may be able to leave them to continue; you may have to remain with them or you may choose to appoint a Computer Monitor who looks after the machine during break and lunch-time.

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3. A CLUSTER OF STAND-ALONES AVAILABLE FROM TIME TO TIME
4. A CLUSTER OF STAND-ALONES AVAILABLE ALL THE TIME

In some schools this arrangement is becoming very popular. An area is supplied with, say, three, four or five computers which are joint property of a faculty. Either the computers are normally positioned singly in classrooms and can be removed to a work area when required by a class, or they are permanently in a work area to which all surrounding classes have access.

The benefit of this arrangement is that more than one group in a class can have access at one time. With a maximum of three pupils to a computer, it would be possible for half a class to be working on the computers for half the lesson and the other half for the second half of the lesson. If the school has an assistant, this arrangement can be particularly attractive, as one half of the class can be doing oral work, while the other half is completing computer work.

The disadvantage with this arrangement is the provision of software and work discs. As programs will be used on more than one machine, you will need to buy a site licence or multi-user licence. You will also need to have multiple copies of all the programs you wish to use and any files you create will have to be copied onto all the work discs. So you must calculate on more expenditure and more preparation time.

- Under certain circumstances this situation may prove to be the best intermediate step between a single computer in the classroom and having access to a network. As we will see in the chapter on software and methodology, there is great advantage in some respects in being able to give all pupils access to a computer during one lesson.

- Do make sure that it is clearly understood in the proper places that this arrangement may need extra financial support if it is to be used to its full potential. You will need an extra number of discs and the ability to buy in site licences.

5. A ROOM FULL OF STAND-ALONES BOOKABLE ON THE TIMETABLE

As the National Curriculum gradually re-shapes the timetable, and with its insistence on cross-curricular IT skills, many schools may well be seeing the demise of Computer Studies and/or Information Technology modules as we have known them. As a result, former computer rooms are being made available to other disciplines and can be booked on either a regular or occasional basis.

The obvious advantage of this situation is that a whole class can be working simultaneously and this opens up new areas of methodology which the teacher may like to explore.

The disadvantage of this particular situation is that each machine has to have its own software, so the comments made about expenditure for clusters also hold good - namely you must purchase a site licence or multi-user licence; you will have to make multiple copies of the programs you use; and any file you create as an exercise will have to be copied onto every working disc.

- As you could be working with as many as ten or twelve computers, this could be extremely expensive in discs and will need an even greater amount of preparation time.

- With good departmental co-operation (the joint writing and duplication of files) the time factor could be reduced; nothing, however, will reduce the need for having a work disc and/or a copy of any program per machine.

- It may prove in the end that the best way to tackle this situation is not to avail yourself of the facilities but wait until the room is networked!

6. A NETWORK ROOM BOOKABLE ON THE TIMETABLE

A room full of computers on a network saves all the time lost in the example given above. Preparation is reduced to the creation of one file, saved onto the hard disc and then accessed by each of the computers.

Most network rooms contain ten to twelve machines, so a class of up to thirty to thirty-six can be accommodated during one lesson.

As with the previous example, having access to a network and being able to work with an entire class opens up possibilities in methodology that cannot be used on the single stand-alone or cluster.

But similarly there are the extra costs that must be considered.

- Programs must be bought with a network licence - often a network version is needed. At least there are no extra costs in work discs, but do make sure you know the cost of a network licence before you put in an order, otherwise your capitation could disappear.

- Careful thought should go into exactly which programs can prove most beneficial on a network. The next chapter should prove helpful in this.

The timetable current in your school and the distance from your teaching room will also need to be taken into consideration before deciding whether using the network room is a viable option.

On a normal 40 lesson per week timetable, the network room (and the computer room in the previous example) will be available 40 times a week - for a period of approx. 35 minutes. There is no hard and fast rule about how often CALL with the whole class should be integrated; examples of one lesson in four, i.e. once a week, are known; or one lesson in eight, i.e. once a fortnight; or even one double lesson per half term; or a six-week block of single/double lessons.

If your school only has one network room available and five departments or faculties are trying to book time, your share will be approx. eight lessons per week. Will this be enough for a regular input with each of the classes taught by the department?

If two rooms are available for booking, your departmental share would be increased to sixteen.

- In short, you need to discuss with your departmental colleagues who would like what kind of access and with which classes. This tally needs then to be put to the school IT co-ordinator and hopefully arranged or a compromise agreed.

If your timetable is worked on a fortnightly basis or if your standard lesson is of an hour's length or longer, then you face a different set of problems. The room will only be bookable for twenty or twenty-five periods a week which increases competition between the departments seeking access and your department's share will decrease.

You may not feel like spending the whole of one lesson on CALL. If network rooms are within easy reach of your teaching room, then a move half-way through a lesson may be feasible, which means you could double up on bookings with a colleague.

If your teaching room is at some distance from the network room - it is surprising how many schools are built on split sites or with clusters of buildings at some distance from the main block - then you may well have to come to the (regrettable) decision that the integration of CALL using the network is not practicable as the situation stands at the moment ... and put in a plea for a network room nearer to your teaching area!

CHAPTER 4

What software should I buy?

At the beginning of the previous chapter it was said that the provision of computers dictates the type of software and methodology. There is obviously yet another ingredient that will weigh in any decision making - namely your own teaching style. It goes without saying that you will be instantly attracted to software that best supports and extends your own teaching methodology and for which you can see practicable possibilities.

As many of the modern language programs currently on sale do not dictate methodology and can be applied, like any other useful medium, in an infinite variety of ways, it would be pointless to attempt to review here the entire list of modern language software currently on sale. For this reason also, examples of good practice have been omitted; to do justice to even a single piece of software, more than one example of good practice would have to be given and even then that may not give a full enough picture of its possible uses.

There is only one way to choose software - by trying it out yourself and deciding how useful or not it could be in your own individual or departmental circumstances.

There is also one other important reason for not giving a definitive list of available software. At the time of writing we find ourselves in a period of transition. New, more powerful machines have been introduced onto the educational market within the last year. Software houses are still responding to this influx. It is to be expected that over the next few months, new programs, as well as the tried and tested ones, will be made available to run on the new machines.

Similarly, a new range of software could be developed in the near future as a result of the current DES National Curriculum Software Support Scheme.

- The world of Information Technology can move fast. It seems to do so, however, in leaps and bounds. Suddenly there is a new product on the market that outstrips existing provision. Or a new type of software suddenly appears on the market. Or prices suddenly rise!

- Always work from the most recent catalogues.

- Wherever possible, try out or see demonstrated a piece of software before purchase (see comment at the end of Chapter 2).

- Do not rely on reviews in magazines; even if they strongly recommend a program, it is still advisable to see it in action first.

- Do not rely on other people's comments, especially negative ones; they may not have considered possible uses which would attract you.

So instead of trying to cover the whole gamut of individual programs, you will find below descriptions of the various applications that are most used at present in ML CALL and some suggested software titles to look out for. Attention will also be drawn to certain characteristics of programs that make them better suited to whole class work, group work or individual work. Checklists are provided at the end of the chapter.

Once again, this is not meant in any way to be prescriptive. It certainly will not be exhaustive.

We will be looking at these applications:

Word processing	Text manipulation
Concept Keyboard	Simulations
Information retrieval	Language work

Word processing

The arrival of accented word processors can be seen as one of the most important advances for modern language teachers. At last work sheets and exam papers can be prepared without recourse to the tiresome practice of adding accents on stencils, Banda sheets or photocopies that have been typewritten. For our pupils it opens up a new field in writing skills.

The role of word processors in ML teaching has been thoroughly covered in another book in this series, Sue Hewer's *Making the most of IT skills,* and it is therefore unnecessary to recover the ground.

However, a few practical hints may well be in order here.

★ There are two types of word processor available: English word processors and specific word processors for foreign languages.

English word processors on the less powerful machines, such as Edword, View, Wordwise, Interword, can produce European accents in print-out by accessing the international character set resident in the printer. The printer manual will contain a

table to show which keys produce which accents and which dip switches need to be changed for which sets (see Appendix).

- If you do not have a printer manual, ask your IT co-ordinator or adviser how to print out accents using the word processor in your computer. Write down the instructions and keep them handy by the computer until you are sure of the system.

- A note of warning - Epson printers do not have circumflexed vowels in the French character set!

- The fact that accents do not appear on screen means there is little use for this facility for classwork, however useful it may be for the teacher's own personal use.

- For teachers making their first forays into IT, using a school word processor to prepare printouts of work sheets and exam papers is still probably one of the most useful ways by which they can familiarise themselves with a computer.

English word processors for the more powerful machines either have the facility of changing to an international keyboard or they allow on-screen accents via the ALT key (see Glossary and Appendix). Again you will need to ask advice of your IT co-ordinator or adviser.

Foreign language word processors are either of two varieties:

★ Programs specifically written for the educational market, e.g. ESM's *European and Asian Folio* for the BBC range; ILLEC's *Allwrite* for the RM Nimbus; SPA's *Write On* for RM Nimbus.

★ Commercial foreign word processors for the more powerful machines, such as *Microsoft Word French* or Diwan's *Arabic Macintosh* which supports Arabic, Urdu and Farsi.

The latter are expensive, whereas the former are not.

Originally designed as a primary word processor, *European and Asian Folio* can be used on the most basic of hardware - a BBC B with a 40 track single disc drive. It boasts one of the fullest range of accents in French including the *oe* dipthong!

As *English or Advanced Folio,* it is used widely in primary schools and this may give it additional merit for use in your school, as the pupils will be used to handling it.

Each language on *Folio* has to be bought separately, unlike ILLEC's *Allwrite* for the Nimbus which has a complete set of European accents in the one program. Both programs have easy print-out facilities in a range of sizes; *Folio,* in addition, has six different character fonts.

New developments on the way include a separate disc supporting accents for *Caption* and possibly an accented version of another primary word processor *Touch Explorer Plus* (see below under Concept Keyboard).

- Check with your feeder primary schools. Which word processor have they introduced? How much use have pupils made of it? What word processing skills can you expect your pupils to have already?

- Check with your local IT centre. Do they have a licence for a primary word processor that can support accents yet? If not, is this is a likely development in the future?

- It is worth noting that Primrose Publishing's *Tick-Tack/Penfriend* programs incorporate their own fully accented modern language word processor: used on the BBC Master or Compact they give full accents to View.

As greater resources are put into schools, the scenario could develop whereby two types of word processors are available to you - the primary programs on the older machines in the classrooms and the more sophisticated programs on the more powerful machines in a computer or network room. If this situation does develop, then you will have the opportunity to develop uses for both types but for different purposes and probably with different age and ability ranges.

The more sophisticated word processors will give pupils greater opportunity to develop existing word processing skills past the elementary stage and will come into their own for Business Studies/Language work and FLAW.

However, there is still a place for programs such as *Folio*, *Allwrite* and *Write On*; their simplicity of operation has to recommend them in the earlier stages, especially if pupils' word processing skills are still having to be developed, and with their variety of character fonts and their easy access to printing in different sizes (see p 19), their flexibility also has much to offer.

- Whether you have the use of a single computer from time to time or whether you have access to the most generous provision of the most up-to-date machines, word processing is going to prove invaluable to your teaching methodology.

- Even with one computer in the classroom, a word processor can be put to good use. But if pupils are to have a fair share of the time available, tasks must be content-limited in order that the time taken to complete them should be controlled.

  Pupils could produce their own labels or simple lists for classroom display and for their exercise books.

  Short texts could be expanded from notes or oral work.

  Messages, post cards and brief letters make good tasks.

- If you are working with a cluster or room of machines, then clearly these task restrictions are unnecessary.

  In these situations you may choose to produce your own texts which have to be manipulated or filled in by pupils. Their version is only saved as hard copy (printout). This reduces the number of discs required.

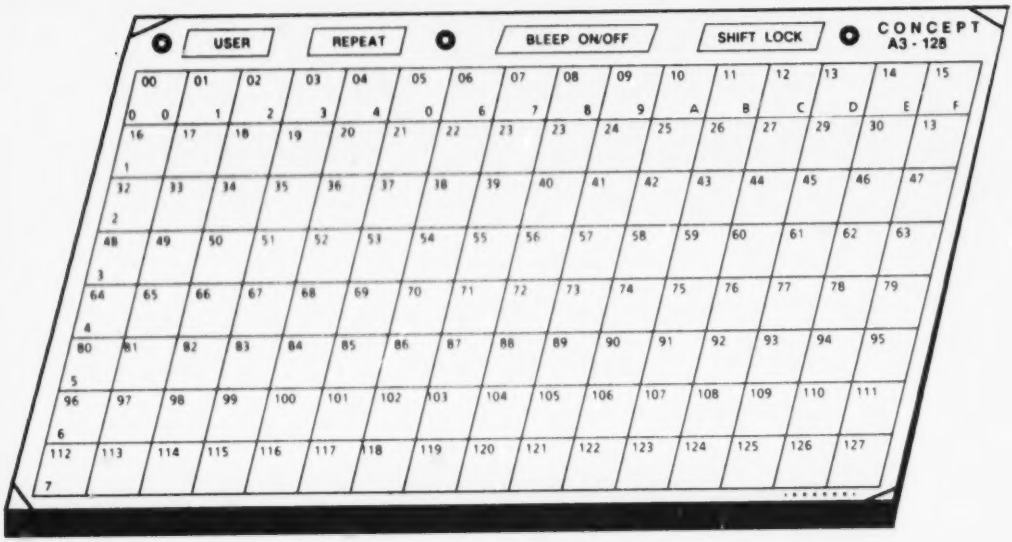
- Ideally you should be aiming at a situation in which each child has their own disc or area on the network, on which all their writings are saved - including their first uncorrected attempts. If pupils are taught to save every version of their writings, then you will find that you and the pupil have a record of their progress.

  For example - a pupil writes down a few details about itself. This is saved as ME1. A copy is printed out and shown to the teacher. Corrections, if necessary, are made on the copy and the pupil returns to the computer to make the corrections. This version is saved as ME2. A few weeks later, after further input, the pupil re-loads ME2 and adds any new information learnt. This is saved as ME3. Again a copy is offered for correction and again the corrected version is saved, this time as ME4.

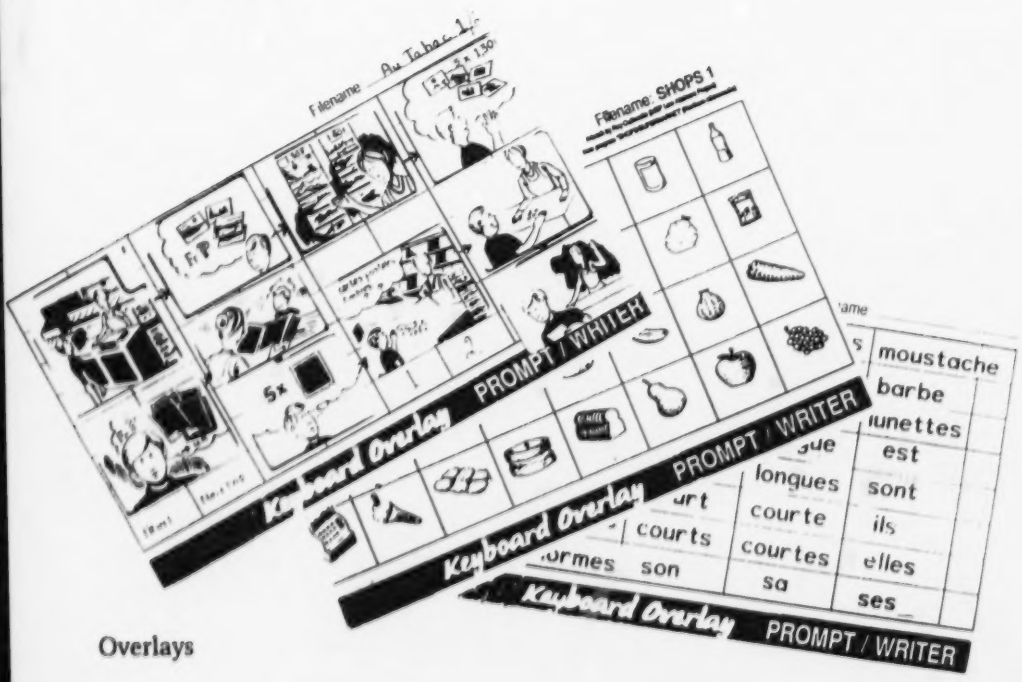
  If this system is continued, a profile of the pupil's progress can be put together by printing out all odd-numbered files. At the same time the pupil is made aware of the fact that present work is built up on previous work and that progress in language is a constant revision of all that has gone before.

The Concept Keyboard

A Concept Keyboard is a touch sensitive pad, either A4 or A3 in size, that can be connected to a BBC computer via the user port. A connection to the RM Nimbus is also available.



Concept Keyboard



Overlays

The pad is divided into eight rows of fifteen squares, each of which or any combination of which can be programmed to produce a response in words on the computer screen. Paper overlays are laid over the squares. The stimulus on the overlay can either be graphic, i.e. in pictures, or in words.

By touching either a picture or part of a picture or by touching a word or series of words in any square/squares, the appropriate response appears on the screen and can either be printed off or word processed via a simple word processor to produce a written task.

The great advantage of a Concept Keyboard is that it allows pupils, whose handwriting or keyboard skills are minimal, to create written work without recourse to either pen and paper or the keyboard.

It also allows pupils to discover for themselves vocabulary and expressions based on a visual prompt and to capture this new information by printing it out.

The potential use of a Concept Keyboard is not restricted to encouraging and developing writing skills. At the time of writing much work is being done in modern languages IT with Concept Keyboards and the various packages that support them, including *Stylus*, *Prompt/Writer*, *Touch Explorer Plus*. There is, however, one disadvantage - at present no package has accents. Within the next few months this gap should be filled - a *Folio* extension disc is due soon and there are plans for *Touch Explorer Plus* to be accented; once these programs are with us, modern languages teachers will have at their disposal a powerful multi-purpose tool for IT work.

Being piloted already is *Concept Match* which can produce accents on screen. It can be best described as the reverse of the normal Concept Keyboard program, in so far as it randomly picks up one of the text entries and displays it on screen. The pupil then has to press the picture/prompt/clue on the keyboard that matches the text - a useful program that could be used to assess how much has been learnt from a conventional program.

It should be emphasised that a Concept Keyboard can be used right across the ability range. In fact *Touch Explorer Plus* has the added advantage that up to six files can be formed into a group to work with one overlay. Each file can contain language of a differing level and allows the pupils to move easily between the files and choose the level of language they wish to use.

★ Check with your Special Needs department. They may already have a Concept Keyboard and programs that support it.

★ With the National Curriculum policy of languages for all being implemented, this could be an area where existing Special Needs methodology and foreign language work could be combined to the benefit of both.

Information retrieval

This title covers a vast area and is possibly also the area of greatest expansion.

It ranges from ready-made programs containing 'pages' of information which can be used for open-ended task work (dedicated programs), via databases for storing your

own information and ends up with the accessing of national and international databases storing hundreds and thousands of pieces of information.

Once again, this field and its methodology have been covered extensively in Sue Hewer's *Making the most of IT skills.*

All that needs to be added here is that any of the areas covered by information retrieval make excellent use of the single computer in the classroom and should be looked into as a priority the moment the first computer arrives in the department. If you have developed or are thinking of developing group activity or multi-media carousel activities, then many of these programs could suit your purposes.

The aptness of this application is best reflected in the number of programs that are now appearing on the market.

DEDICATED PROGRAMS

Sue Hewer uses L'Ensouleiado's *French Database* as an example of a disc-based dedicated database in her book.

RLDU, Avon, have just produced *Mini Databanks* comprising four topics (see p 23). There are four routes in English and four routes in French for each title. German versions are to follow.

Both of these productions come supplied with work sheets or work ideas. The Brealey Language Centre produces a backup pack to *French Database* including tape exercises and photocopiable task sheets. RLDU's own work sheets come in both English and French which extends the range of ability at whom this program can be targeted.

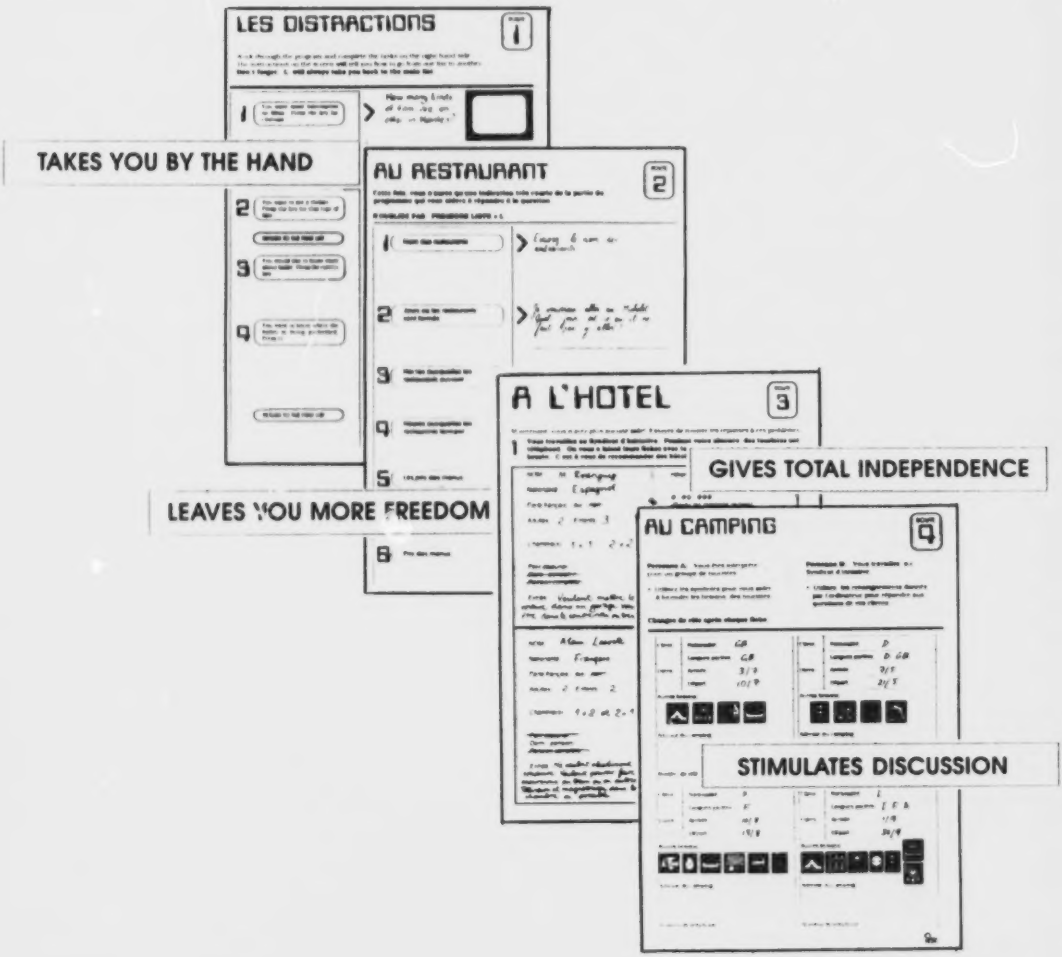
CDG from Scotland have a series of dedicated databases called *Contemporary Data Editions*; using a series of relief maps, a wide range of statistical data about France and Germany and the European Community can be interpreted. This too is backed up by work units in either English/French or English/German.

DATABASES + READY MADE FILES

NCET have produced *MLFIND*, a fully accented database, in which pupils and teachers alike can store their own information. It comes with five French and five German ready-made files covering personal information, places to visit in the capital, weather forecasts, holiday homes and lost property.

Fiche 1

nom	**Claude Duval**
sexe	**g**
âge	**16**
domicile	**113 avenue Jeane d'Arc Grenoble Isère**
C.P.	**38013**
famille	**0 frères: 1 soeur**
parents	**éléctricien institutrice**
caractère	**actif: énergique**
passetemps	**le cyclisme**



Dynamique Informatique, Warwickshire, have produced seven similar files in French for use with the *Grass* database. The files have a program that puts accents on screen. An accented version of *Grass* is now available from Newman College and there are bids in to the DES to exploit the greater potential of the more powerful machines with accented databases.

SPECIFIC USE DATABASES

WIDA's *Wordstore* works as a database for vocabulary. Up to 1,000 entries can be made using an 80 track disc. All entries are automatically alphabetically sorted and there is room in each entry for definitions and sentences with the word in context. It also includes a test program. A definite improvement on the traditional vocabulary book!

Primrose Publishing's *Tick-Tack/Penfriend* program works on a retrieval system of files containing single sentences, translations of which are found in the handbooks. The sentences can be used to build up either business letters (*Tick-Tack*) or penfriend letters (*Penfriend*). Using the integral word processor, your own sentences, phrases, complete post cards or letters can be saved for re-working in class. Not strictly a database, rather a method of creating and storing pieces of information via a word processor for later retrieval.

Linguawrite from Lingua uses the same principle but succeeds in imitating the search system on a CD-ROM. With a database of 1,800 phrases in each of five language blocks, it too generates business letters and provides a sound training in the developing art of searching using CD-ROM technology, without the expense of the equipment.

The very adaptability of these programs is what recommends them to teachers. The material they contain complements and extends any class work, whatever the individual teacher's methodology.

★ The dedicated databases are provided with good backup materials and could be put to use immediately in class and at the same time provide an easy route into integration of IT in the classroom.

★ Whether being used as part of group activity work or for use with a whole class, information retrieval is probably the simplest of applications available on the single computer.

★ Databasing is a valuable skill. Used for administration purposes it can save large amounts of time and energy. Ask for training in school on the school's database. When you have thoroughly grasped the principles, move into an accented database and introduce your pupils to the benefits of storage of information for later retrieval.

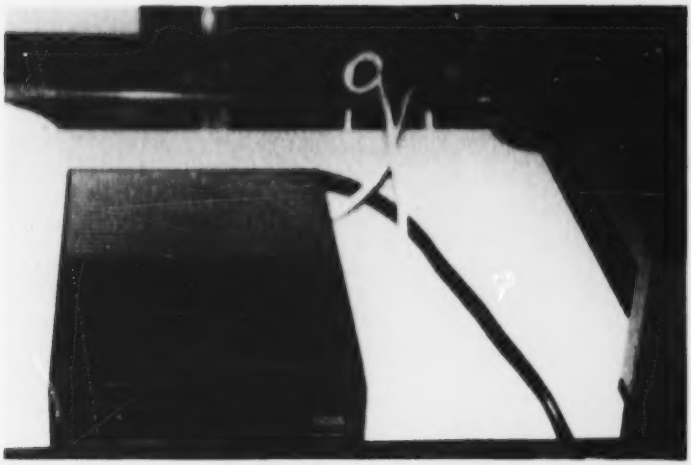
★ This area of software is expanding all the time. Keep an eye open for reviews in the educational press or language journals.

ON-LINE DATABASES

When we move onto the subject of accessing on-line databases via a modem and the telephone line, both nationally and internationally, we immediately stumble on the problem of finance.

Modern language departments are not known for their excessive capitation budgets and most would find it hard, if not impossible, to find the money to venture into this territory without extra support from the school.

Modem



CAMPUS 2000 has a subscription cost which in some areas has been bought in under licence via the LEA. In other areas it is up to individual schools. It has a great deal of information in its modern language database and its value is well known to those schools who access it regularly. If your school does not yet subscribe, you will have to find other departments or faculties who could use its facilities to help bear the cost and then decide jointly how much access you as a school can afford.

International databases such as TELETEL in France or DATASTAR in Switzerland (see p 26) offer marvellous authentic material and, perhaps more importantly, authentic experience. Again the costs of accessing must be clearly worked out in advance. Both now have a budget system by which you can agree in advance how much time you wish to buy so you can be assured of not overspending.

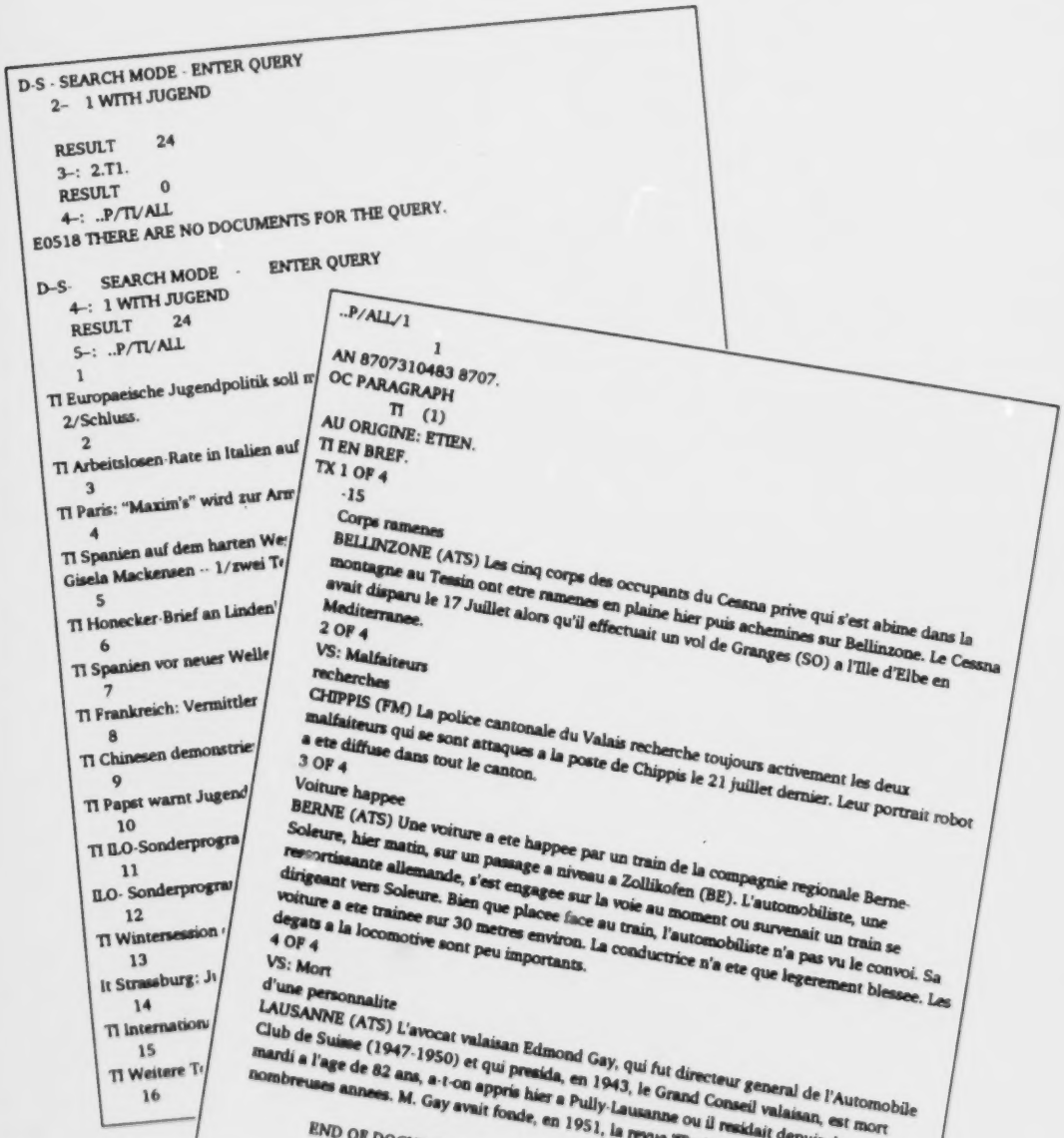
★ Both of these services are genuine commercial services. There may be some merit in trying to find a business sponsor, who could themselves make use of the service and could agree to help meet your costs.

★ DATASTAR now offers its own electronic mail service. As there is no subscription cost, with careful budgeting, schools could be linked inexpensively with their exchange schools anywhere in Europe.

With an increased emphasis on Languages at Work and Business Studies and Languages, it is hard not to be tempted by such rich sources of information, and it is disheartening that they may have to remain for some time yet beyond the reach of many of us because of lack of finance.

In the meantime there are few off-line programs that seek to emulate these systems: *Emutel* and *Tele Nantes* imitate pages from TELETEL: with *Newsroom* or *Extra*! you could create a simulation of a newspaper on-line, full-text wire service with just a single computer and a printer: using a system such as Communitel, 'pages' of information could be built up on a TELETEL model.

News headlines from Datastar



D-S - SEARCH MODE - ENTER QUERY
2- 1 WITH JUGEND

RESULT 24
3-: 2.T1.
RESULT 0
4-: ..P/TI/ALL
E0518 THERE ARE NO DOCUMENTS FOR THE QUERY.

D-S- SEARCH MODE - ENTER QUERY
4-: 1 WITH JUGEND
RESULT 24
5-: ..P/TI/ALL
1
TI Europaeische Jugendpolitik soll m
2/Schluss.
2
TI Arbeitslosen-Rate in Italien auf
3
TI Paris: "Maxim's" wird zur Arm
4
TI Spanien auf dem harten We
Gisela Mackensen -- 1/zwei T
5
TI Honecker-Brief an Linden'
6
TI Spanien vor neuer Welle
7
TI Frankreich: Vermittler
8
TI Chinesen demonstrie
9
TI Papst warnt Jugend
10
TI ILO-Sonderprogra
11
ILO- Sonderprogra
12
TI Wintersession
13
It Strassburg: J
14
TI Internation
15
TI Weitere T
16

..P/ALL/1
1
AN 8707310483 8707.
OC PARAGRAPH
TI (1)
AU ORIGINE: ETIEN.
TI EN BREF.
TX 1 OF 4
-15
Corps ramenes
BELLINZONE (ATS) Les cinq corps des occupants du Cessna prive qui s'est abime dans la montagne au Tessin ont etre ramenes en plaine hier puis achemines sur Bellinzone. Le Cessna avait disparu le 17 Juillet alors qu'il effectuait un vol de Granges (SO) a l'Ile d'Elbe en Mediterranee.
2 OF 4
VS: Malfaiteurs
recherches
CHIPPIS (FM) La police cantonale du Valais recherche toujours activement les deux malfaiteurs qui se sont attaques a la poste de Chippis le 21 juillet dernier. Leur portrait robot a ete diffuse dans tout le canton.
3 OF 4
Voiture happee
BERNE (ATS) Une voiture a ete happee par un train de la compagnie regionale Berne-Soleure, hier matin, sur un passage a niveau a Zollikofen (BE). L'automobiliste, une ressortissante allemande, s'est engagee sur la voie au moment ou survenait un train se dirigeant vers Soleure. Bien que placee face au train, l'automobiliste n'a pas vu le convoi. Sa voiture a ete trainee sur 30 metres environ. La conductrice n'a ete que legerement blessee. Les degats a la locomotive sont peu importants.
4 OF 4
VS: Mort
d'une personnalite
LAUSANNE (ATS) L'avocat valaisan Edmond Gay, qui fut directeur general de l'Automobile Club de Suisse (1947-1950) et qui presida, en 1943, le Grand Conseil valaisan, est mort mardi a l'age de 82 ans, a-t-on appris hier a Pully-Lausanne ou il residait depuis de nombreuses annees. M. Gay avait fonde, en 1951, la revue "Treize Etoiles".

END OF DOCUMENT

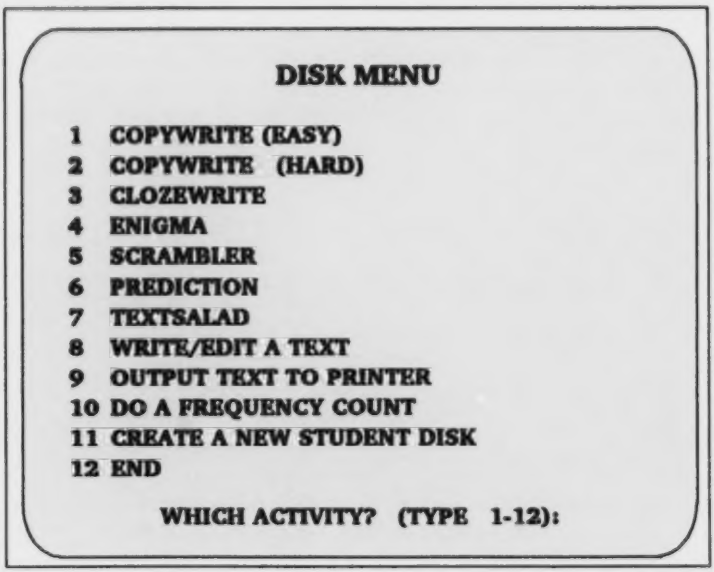
- ★ The world of technology is opening up exciting new sources of material and information all the time. But with access on-line there is always a financial implication and that must be firmly addressed before venturing into this area.
- ★ Collaboration with another school may cut costs and make even a short-term project viable.
- ★ Business sponsorship could help cover costs as well.
- ★ Imitations of materials can be created using Viewdata systems, but then there is the time factor in creating and authoring to be considered. Yet again, a consortium of schools could perhaps consider sharing the work load and making joint resources.

Text manipulation

This title is somewhat ambiguous: it covers those programs which themselves manipulate text for the pupil to 'unravel' and those exercises where the pupil manipulates an existing text. The latter methodology is covered under word processing tasks in Sue Hewer's *Making the most of IT skills*.

In the former category fall most of the authoring programs available to modern languages, of which there are a large number.

Fun with Texts menu enlarged showing prog 8 write/edit text



An authoring program does not supply texts, other than a few demo files. As its title implies, it includes an authoring program for the teacher to enter text to suit individual classes and/or individual levels of ability. In this way the teacher can ensure that pupils are working on material and contexts that revise or extend work done in the classroom. Banks of files, e.g. 'gap-fill' or multiple choice questions, can be built up gradually or by co-operative effort.

There is a time factor, in the creation of text files, to be considered - but this is the only drawback, if indeed it can be considered even that. The benefits of this type of program far outweigh the effort put into writing in texts. For a start the program is infinitely extendable. You can create as many files for it as you wish, which makes it good value for money. At the same time you know that the texts cover precisely the language work you wish your pupils to tackle. You can even have differentiated files prepared for one class. And many of the programs offer a variety of methodology, so that you can vary the tasks and input. In short - flexibility is what is offered by this type of program.

Research into CALL in the secondary sector is still in its infancy. Various articles and observations made would indicate that there will be some difficulty in differentiating between the obvious appeal the computer holds for pupils, which is undeniable, the motivation and increased concentration that are generated, and actual linguistic benefits.

However, there is a growing body of opinion that believes that activities such as text manipulation increase pupil awareness of the structure of language and train them, both consciously and unconsciously, to concentrate on form in a way not achievable by other media. Because many of the tasks cannot be completed without some kind of analysis, and because the computer can respond instantly to error, pupils are encouraged to re-think their thought processes and revise their response until they achieve a correct answer. This has the effect of repeating input until they have mastered or acquired the particular elements under study. If this assumption is correct, there would seem to be great value for language learning in text manipulation.

There are, however, certain factors that must be taken into consideration before buying in this type of program. Some are suited to classroom work; others are best used with a cluster or network. The points to consider are these:

★ Can you fix the time taken for any one exercise?

W.S showing question 'How many minutes...?

Teacher's Notes

Type the number of minutes for each student, 10 mins. is a reasonable time, then press RETURN: - ?

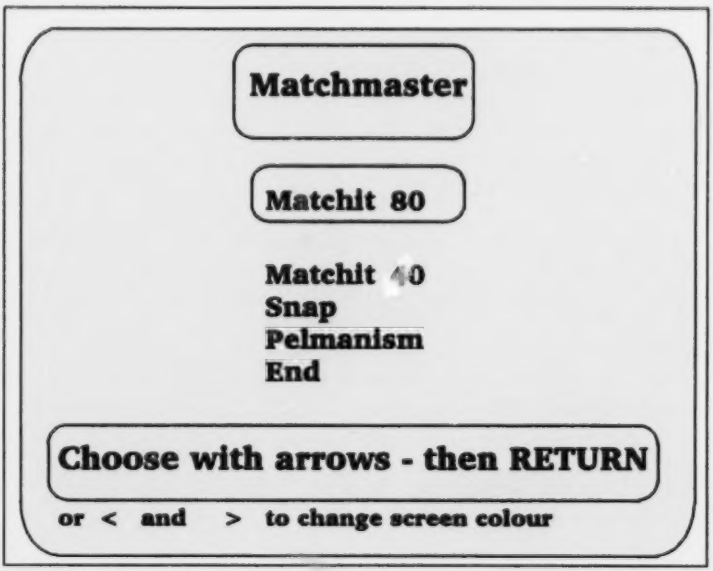
Some programs allow you to enter a time in minutes that the pupil is to spend on the exercise. If this is so, it is easy enough with one computer in the classroom to gauge how many groups or individual pupils will be able to use the computer during the lesson.

Other programs can be given a content limit, which works almost as well. If only ten phrases have to be matched or ten sentences unjumbled, then you can count on completion of the exercise in a calculable amount of time, e.g. in five minutes you know that the exercise can be done at least once, if not twice.

★ If the time taken to complete the task or exercise cannot be calculated, as it depends on the pupil's ability and/or the length of the text, then these programs are best reserved for when access can be had by the whole class during a lesson, whether with a cluster or a room of computers.

★ Does the program offer a variety of different exercises in which the same text can be manipulated in a variety of ways?

Matchmaster Menu



★ Can you vary your input? Will it accept words, phrases, sentences, whole texts?

★ Does it give a result for each pupil? Does it store a series of results? Can these be printed out at the end of a session? If not, do you need to know? With some programs, completion of the task itself is the result.

★ Is it easy for a second group to re-start the program? Or does each pupil/group have to return to the beginning of the program and pass through a series of title pages, jingles, graphics?

This latter point can be extremely important when working in class with a single computer. There is nothing quite so distracting as a jingle being played for the fifth time in a lesson. Good programming should eliminate this; many programs offer a 'no sound' alternative.

Another couple of small but important points need to be mentioned. In the early days of programming, programmers were encouraged to use jingles, graphics and flashing colours; the theory was that this would hold and attract the pupil's attention. Practice has proved this unnecessary. And in one respect - flashing colours - it could actually be detrimental. There is some evidence to prove that flashing colours from a computer screen can be harmful to people who suffer from 'petit mal' or 'grand mal'. If this could be a problem in a class, it is best to avoid any program which constantly uses flashing colours.

Similarly, some combinations of colour might not be suitable for those who are colour-blind. Occasionally programs will allow you to change both background and text colour and for this reason alone should be considered. Most programs, however, have opted for the safe combinations - yellow on black; dark blue on cyan (pale blue) - and should suit the majority of pupils.

The comments above apply equally well to the non-text manipulation programs that will be discussed below.

As stated at the beginning of this section, we are fortunate to have a large number of text manipulation packages. CAMSOFT's *Fun with texts*, with seven different manipulation programs, has proved its popularity for some time. They also produce *Gapkit*, an extremely versatile program that allows teachers to create their own gap-fill exercises - the smallest gap can be a single letter anywhere within a word; the largest gap could be a complete 'page' of text.

WIDA have an extensive range of authoring programs, all carrying the *...Master* title: *Choicemaster, Gapmaster, Matchmaster, Clozemaster* etc. *Developing Tray* from ILLEC and *Storyboard* from WIDA are both used widely; *Storyboard* has the advantage of multi-lingual versions.

A & R Creations have *Word sequencing*, now in three languages, a useful program for reinforcing any word order that differs from English. Locheesoft produce a German sentence building program that recognises possible permutations of acceptable word order.

As the purpose of these programs is to practise new language or structures being covered in class, it is obvious that they best suit a whole class activity and should be considered as prime options for use on the network or in the computer room.

Computer room and pupils

However, with a content limit and/or a time limit, some of them adapt equally well to group activity or carousel work. This may lead to you deciding that one or two particularly useful programs are best bought in for both classroom and computer/network room purposes.

Simulations

These programs, as the name implies, place the pupil in an imaginary 'real' situation and either allow them to explore the various routes through the program or present the pupil with questions or activities that have to be completed by typing in or selecting a response.

To enhance the imaginary situation, some programs produce pictures and moving graphics on screen; others are content to allow pupils to create the background in their mind's eye and just present text on screen.

Due to the limitations of some machines, such as the BBC, to produce both text and high definition graphics simultaneously on screen, some programs have opted for less sophisticated graphics and text.

Whatever the result, one thing is certain with these programs - they are all dedicated programs, i.e. their content cannot be altered. If the language content does not exactly fit either the content of your lessons or the level of pupil you would like to use it with, you cannot make changes to it.

That having been said, the best of these programs will be found to have specific uses at certain times in the language learning process, when the topic being learnt coincides with the content of the program. So these are not programs for which you

will necessarily find constant use - unless they are made available to pupils outside of lessons, e.g. in a library, so that they can explore and/or revise work covered.
There is a great variety of programs on offer: L'Ensouleiado's *French/Spanish Holiday* and *Vivent les Vacances* offer a simple linear approach through an imaginary visit to France with multi-choice questions; CUP's *Granville* also simulates a visit to France but the framework is entirely open-ended and pupils can decide for themselves where they go and what they do within the range of facilities on offer.

Centre Ville/Stadtmitte (Chalksoft) covers the understanding of and the giving of directions in town; it uses graphics to actively display instructions chosen by the pupil. *Directions* from Netherhall (CUP) also covers the same ground but with the emphasis on more sophisticated graphics. It has three levels within the program, each of which can be accessed separately.

AVP offer *Au restaurant/Im Restaurant*, *Verkehrsunfall* and *Boulogne*, whose contents are clearly indicated by their titles.

WIDA's *Faisons des Achats* obviously covers shopping and uses limited graphics to represent the shops, whereas *Siville*, the interactive video disc program, produced under a DTI scheme, uses film, cartoon-style graphics, sound and text to achieve the same - an indication, hopefully, of things to come. *Siville* is not on sale but can be borrowed - each LEA was offered a copy at the end of the scheme.

Role-play simulations - *Hotel Excelsior, Air Soleil* and *Check-In* all provide an interactive program for simulating booking a hotel room, an air flight and checking in at an airport respectively. Aimed to be part of a larger role-play scenario, they effectively silence the oft heard criticism - *Ah, but where's the oral work with a computer?* These programs cannot be worked without question and answer role-play from two groups of pupils.

The MESU/NCET video *Using Granville in the classroom* shows pupils using *Granville* in an example of this kind of role-play as well.

Macmillan's *Cops and Robbers* covers descriptions and CUP's *Quelle Tete* or *Kopfjäger* can be used for the same purpose but has greater flexibility in that it does not place the drawing of any one head in any definite situation.

NCET's *Kidnap* makes use of descriptions, map references and brochure material to pursue a kidnapper and his/her victim around Northern France.

Adventure games have long been popular with children - for some the only personal use they may have made of a computer. There are a number of these available in French and German - *Incendi à l'Hotel, Schloss Schattenburg, Manoir des Oiseaux, The Princess and the Ring*, etc. The advent of MS-DOS machines should see an increased number of international standard programs coming onto the market and it could well be that this kind of program will be imported direct from Europe.

These latter programs may well engross our pupils and they may cover a good range of vocabulary, but their use in the classroom is likely to be minimal; they could be put to best use in a library or resource unit, where pupils can have free access to them in their own time.

The former, on the other hand, can offer pupils the chance of practising language in a context to which they can relate and which they can repeat as often as they like, until they are confident that they have mastered the vocabulary and expressions involved.

Language work

Under this heading come all those programs designed to test or give practice in grammatical structures or vocabulary. Among the first programs to have been created for CALL, they have stood the test of time well.

To the amazement of teachers, pupils have shown themselves willing to settle down to exercises, which, using any other medium, would have guaranteed an almost immediate loss of concentration and interest. Within one lesson they might work their way through a couple of verb programs, followed by one on the use of pronouns with a quick final vocabulary test. It is no wonder that these programs are still on the market and that many teachers make extensive use of them.

Without wishing to deny teachers the evidence of their own experience, a word of caution is perhaps needed here. For a generation brought up on the most sophisticated of arcade and home computer games, pupils can be very undiscriminating when it comes to other types of computer programs. It has been suggested, though not proved, that the medium is the attraction and that especially young children will willingly spend large amounts of time on even the most repetitive and valueless of 'games'.

- The eagerness of pupils to work on the computer should not be taken as a positive judgement on the program being used, rather that it is the medium that holds their attention.

- If pupils are willing, as they seem to be, to work on anything on the computer, then we need to exercise great care that we do not allow them too great an access to programs whose content is limited or does not revise or extend work being covered at that time. There is always good reason for revision but not for needless repetition.

- Wherever possible, grammatical exercises or vocabulary testing should have a direct connection with work that has been covered.

- As an alternative, what is practised on the computer should be rolled on into following lessons in oral, aural or written work to ensure its proper assimilation.

In this way, good use can be made of the many purely grammatical programs on the market. They range from the *Clef* series for the 16+ age group to the *Henri Beret* and *Willi Wunderbar* series from AVP.

There are quite a number of programs for practice in verbs for French, German, Spanish, Russian and even Latin. The BBC programmes *Deutsch Direkt* and *A vous la France* have support software.

P

P Computatorium electronicum

1 Ut iam intellexisti, hanc epistulam parvo computatorio electronico meo scribo.

2 Multo facilius est quam scribere manibus vel machina scriptoria.

3 Habesne computatorium electronicum? Quale est?

4 Ratione singulari, quae me ad hanc epistulam scribendam adiuvat, utor: appellatur PF.

5 Non solum quid scribatur et quomodo scribendum sit subicit, sed etiam directo in Italicum phrases convertit.

6 Scribere epistulas multo facilius et iucundius fit.

7 Phrases ex libro in sermone nostro eligimus, omnis phrasis numerum suum codicis habet.

8 Postea parvus discus externae linguae in computatorium electronicum inseritur et codicis numeri pulsantur.

9 Phrases electae in visiludiis lingua externa scriptae apparent.

Topic-specific programs such as those that practise time expressions, colour agreements or areas of vocabulary are too numerable to be mentioned individually here. Once again, the recommendation is that the latest catalogues are referred to and, where possible, hands-on experience is had before purchase.

- As many of these programs contain more than one activity, usually of short duration, these programs lend themselves to both the single stand-alone in the classroom - as part of a group activity carousel or the whole class working together in the computer/network room.

- The checklist for software below applies most particularly to this type of program. Programs that have lengthy introductions with extensive graphics and jingles and which do not allow an easy return to a main menu, so that a second activity can be chosen, should be avoided.

CHECKLIST FOR SOFTWARE

The following two sets of questions should be asked when evaluating software. If the answers to the first set of questions are in the main YES, then the program could have restricted use. If the answers to the second set are in the main YES, then the program has sufficient flexibility to make it a versatile and therefore useful package.

- ☐ Is there a long introduction before you get to the main menu?
- ☐ Are extensive graphics and jingles used in the introduction?
- ☐ Do they take up more than 5-10 seconds?
- ☐ Does the program offer only one activity?
- ☐ Is each activity restricted to one methodology?
- ☐ Is the vocabulary limited to one topic?
- ☐ Do you have to work through the first activity to get to the second one?

- ☐ Does the information with the software give full details of vocabulary/expressions covered in the program?
- ☐ Can the introductory graphics/jingles be avoided on a re-run?
- ☐ Are the instructions on the screen enough to be able to work through the program without reference to the instruction booklet?
- ☐ Is there a main menu?
- ☐ Can you list all the available files?
- ☐ Can you easily return to the main menu from the end of an activity?
- ☐ Can the program be given a time limit?
- ☐ Can the program be given a content limit?
- ☐ Can the program be used for all abilities?
- ☐ Does the program offer more than one approach?
- ☐ Does it store/print out results and scores?

You also need to ask yourself these two questions:

How well does the vocabulary/content cover work the class/pupil has been working on or is about to work on?

- ☐ don't know
- ☐ quite well
- ☐ very well
- ☐ authored to suit

Does the pupil have to have good keyboard skills to use this program?

- ☐ only needs to use the arrow/cursor keys
- ☐ only needs to use the number keys
- ☐ only needs to use a restricted number of keys
- ☐ must be able to type (know the keyboard)
- ☐ must be able to use the f keys
- ☐ must be able to use the SHIFT or CTRL + f keys

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CHECKLIST FOR SUITABILITY OF APPLICATION

Below is a diagrammatic overview of the content of this chapter. It must be emphasised that it is merely a guide - it is not meant to be prescriptive; existing practice in ML CALL is so varied that it would be wrong to preclude the possible use of a program in any one situation. The only exception given is the use of Concept Keyboards in a computer/network room. It is unlikely that any school will be able to provide twelve Concept Keyboards for the sole use of a modern language department - though one can never be sure!

The comment 'possible' indicates that it **can** be done but you will need to adapt the usual methodology to the situation indicated. For example:

Single computer/whole class activity and word processing

Either: the content must be severely limited so that all pupils, whether working individually or in pairs, can have enough access to the computer in order to achieve their task, i.e. making labels; adapting a brief passage; adding some sentences to previous work;

or: one group/pupil writes down contributions from the whole class to make a complete text, i.e. retelling orally a story/dialogue which is then typed into the computer;

or: suggestions from the whole class for survey questions/headlines/invented personal details are typed in, printed out in number and distributed to pairs/groups for further work.

Similarly:

Single computer/whole class activity and text manipulation

Either: a large screen/monitor is available which makes it possible for a class to work together on a text manipulation program. This can be a useful way of introducing the techniques of this type of program;

or: a small group work from the computer and relay orally to the class the task in hand.

When considering group activities with either a single or a cluster of computers and text manipulation, then the recommendation is that either you choose a program that has its own in-built time limit, so that each group can conveniently regulate its own time, or the content, i.e. number of sentences to be reconstructed or lines of text to be re-written, has to be curtailed to an amount that can be feasibly covered in the time available.

	Single computer whole class activity	Single computer group activity	Cluster	Computer/net-work room
Word Processing	possible	with content limit	Yes	Yes
Concept Keyboard	Yes	Yes	if CKs available	No
Information retrieval	Yes	Yes	Yes	possible
Text manipulation	possible	with time/content limit	with time/ content limit	Yes
Simulation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Language work	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

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CHAPTER 5

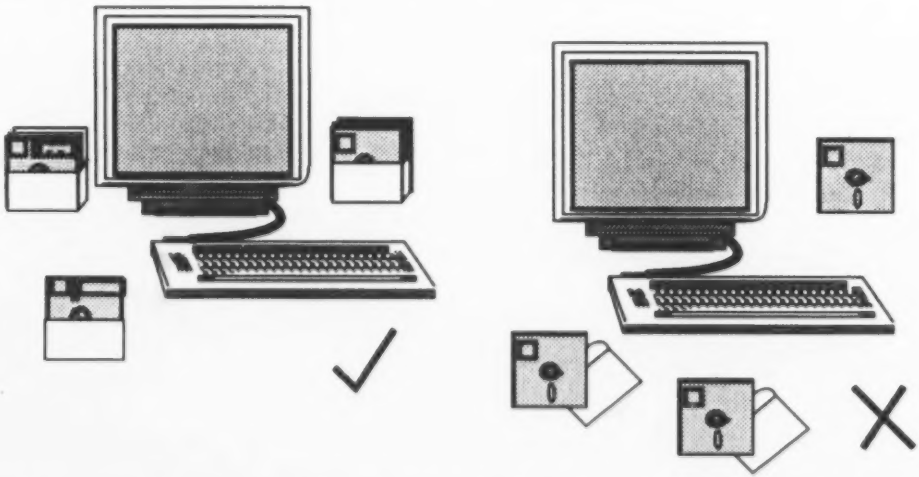
Problems and pitfalls

Disc management

Discs are delicate objects - they need careful handling.

A postman once doubled one up in order to squeeze it through my letter-box. The extent of force used was marked by the crease in the cardboard disc cover. The program worked first time and has continued to do so ever since. I give the example merely to prove that they are more robust than they are given credit for. Not that I would recommend this treatment!

The three things they should avoid are powerful sources of electricity, direct heat and anything coming in contact with the exposed plastic part.



- Make sure all your pupils know how to handle them, i.e. not to touch the plastic surface.
- Make sure that after use the disc is returned immediately to its paper sleeve and, preferably, to its box.
- Do not leave them on or near the TV/monitor for any length of time.
- Do not leave near a source of heat, i.e. on or near radiators or in direct sunlight or on the back window of your car on a hot summer's day.

With this minimum of precaution there is no reason why you should experience any problems. That having been said, like any man-made object, flawed ones do occur from time to time.

If you have any problems formatting new discs - send the whole box back to the manufacturer.

If a disc corrupts (i.e. programs/files cannot be accessed), then track down your nearest IT enthusiast who owns a Disc Doctor disc and see if it can be saved. If not, cut your losses and either re-format it to use again or, if problems persist, throw it away.

For authoring programs and word processed files...

...number 1 rule - always make regular backups of your discs.

Very few people are consistent about backing-up discs and many people live to regret that they were not of their number.

It is expensive - it means you have to calculate on two discs for every one you want to work from, but when an inadvertant sticky finger has just 'wiped' the last six months work, you wish you'd made the effort.

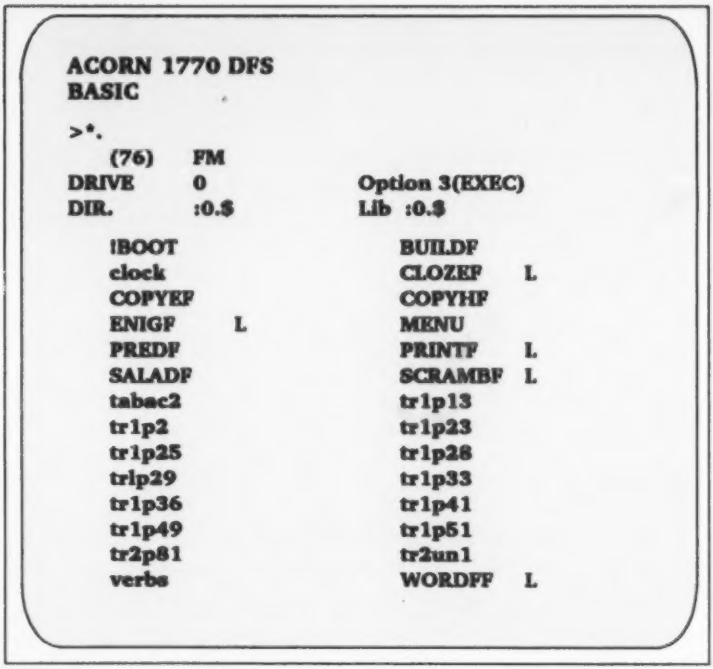
It is good practice to make a habit of backing-up discs at regular intervals - every Friday afternoon - once a fortnight - every half term - on TE Days.

```
ACORN MOS
ACORN 1770 DFS
BASIC

>*ENABLE
>*BACKUP 0 1
```

One small but very important point - make sure you label your discs properly - both on the disc and the sleeve. There is nothing more irritating that searching a pile of discs for a file whose title you forgot to add on to the label. If there is no room on a disc label for all the file names, then merely number the discs and sleeves and keep a record on the sleeve of new files.

It is possible to print out the catalogue of files straight from the screen. This could be done at the backing-up session and the printouts stuck to the sleeves (see appendix).



If an authoring program has a printout facility, then it is a good idea to keep a printout of each file created. In this way other members of the department can easily check the content to see if they can make use of it and when months later you want to use it again with another class, you can quickly refresh your memory.

If you are working on a network, your IT co-ordinator should be making a backup of all the programs on the hard disc; this is usually done once a term.

Time management

DEDICATED PROGRAMS

You will need to spend time working your way through any dedicated program you buy, so that its potential use can be assessed. Ask to be given time to do this. It is often best done as a departmental exercise so that you can all simultaneously judge at what point in the syllabus you would like to integrate it. As IT is no longer the preserve of the lone enthusiast but very much a departmental effort, this suggestion should find fertile ground.

The content of any dedicated program is so obvious that it should not be difficult to place it in the stream of topics being covered. As a department, however, you may choose to create differentiated approaches to a single program to spread its capability across the ability range. Again this is best done as a joint operation within the department.

Some programs take minutes to author; others take a much longer time to prepare and create.

If you write texts individually, then the notes above on keeping a record of them are important. Once again, time should be set aside at departmental meetings and/or TE days to give everyone in the department the opportunity to brief the rest on any new files available.

Keeping a simple list of titles and a summary of contents, whether on the word processor or in a database, could help here.

German Computer Programs

* I am GERMAN1 Main Program: Fun with texts

DH1P13	Introductions:	Tag! Ich heiße Chris. Ich bin 13 Jahre alt und wohne in Kiel.
DH1P16	Family & pets:	Ich heiße Gabi. Ich habe 2 Brüder und einen Hund.
DH1P23	Hobbies:	Ich heiße Jens und ich bin 12. Meine Hobbys sind Angeln & Radfahren. Ich höre gern Popmusik. In meiner Freizeit lese ich gern.
DH1P27	Hobbies:	Bernd ist 16 Jahre alt und wohnt in der Nähe von Graz. Er treibt viel Sport und spielt besonders gern Handball.
DH1P35	Directions:	Wie komme ich am besten zum ...?
DH1P38	Directions:	Ein Tourist fragt einen Mann. Ich suche ein Café. Gibt es hier in der Nähe ein Café?
DH1P42	Tourist Office:	Guten Tag. Kann ich Ihnen helfen?
DH1P47	Pocket money:	Dieter, wieviel Taschengeld bekommst du?
DH1P51	Post Office:	Was kostet ein Brief nach England?
DH1P54	Shopping:	Ich möchte einen Stadtplan, bitte.
DH1P61	Snack bar:	Hast du Hunger, Dieter? Ich hätte gern ...
DH1P66	Café:	Herr Ober, ich hätte gern einen Kaffee.
DH1P67	Shopping + Modals:	Text from page 67: Martin ist 16.
DH1P72	Vehicles:	Wie fahre ich am besten zum Schwimmbad?
DH1P80	Travel & weather + sub. clauses:	Wenn das Wetter schön ist, gehe ich zu Fuß zur Schule.

What can go wrong?

Even the most experienced IT user is faced with problems from time to time - some of which are easily solved; others elude all except the keenest of technocrats.

For the beginner the simplest of error messages on screen can be bewildering and daunting. Below are a list of commonest 'hang-ups' that can be met using the BBC

range. Limited space prevents extensive coverage on other types of machine, though many of the hints apply equally well to other machines.

1. Program won't start

You have put a disc in the disc drive. You have 'booted' the program in, i.e. pressed SHIFT/BREAK, and still nothing happens...

a) Check all leads and connections. Sounds obvious, but it does happen that the disc drive lead is not fully connected or its power lead has come out. Some disc drives have an ON/OFF switch as well.

Make sure the latch/gate of the disc drive is firmly locked and that the disc is properly in place.

Check that you have not put the disc in upside-down. With 5¼" discs, the seams of the cardboard cover should be facing downwards and the side with the exposed plastic section should be inserted first. If working with 3½" discs, then the side with the metal cover is inserted first and the round metal disc is facing down.

b) Re-boot the program; this time make sure you hold the SHIFT key down - preferably the one on the left hand side of the keyboard; then with the right hand press the BREAK key - do not hold it down; as soon as the BREAK key is released, you should hear the disc drive engage; then release the SHIFT key.

c) If this still doesn't work, type in *OPT4,3 to set the !BOOT setting and try b) again.

d) It still doesn't work? Type in *EXEC !BOOT and press RETURN.

If none of these work, catalogue the disc by typing *. (RETURN). Is there a !BOOT file on the disc?

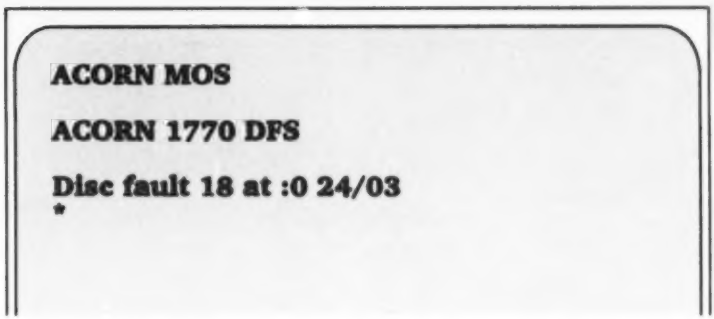
```
ACORN MOS

ACORN 1770 DFS

BASIC

>*.
```

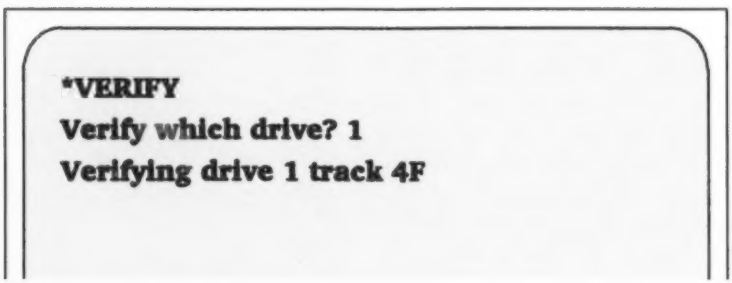
If the answer is Yes and none of the above work, use your formatting disc to verify (check for faults) the disc (a BBC Master has a built-in program for this; see handbook).



If the answer is No, either get your IT co-ordinator to show you how to build a !BOOT file or for the moment chain in the program you want - type CH."(main file/program name)" and press RETURN.

e) Disc fault 18 at 00/00 (or other numerical value). If this appears on the screen, the disc drive is set to the wrong tracking. You are trying to access a 40 track disc at 80 or vice versa. Simply switch the tracking on the disc drive and re-start.

If your disc drive has only one setting, i.e. only 40 track or only 80 track, and your disc is formatted for the other size, then you will not be able to use that particular disc on that disc drive. Hence the advice given earlier that any disc drive bought or received should be both 40/80.

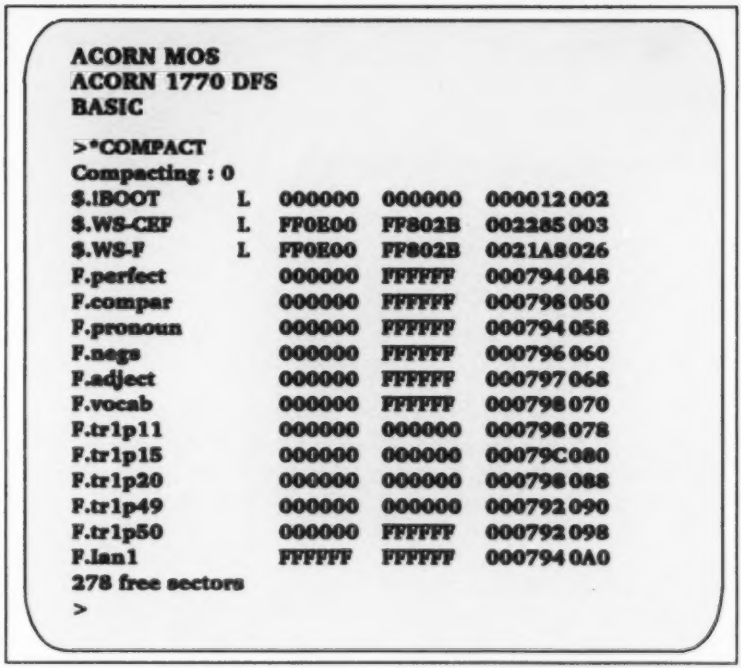


2. Authoring problems - file won't save

Nothing is more frustrating than not being able to save work that you have just spent precious time creating. The usual error message here is 'Disc Full'. This can mean exactly what it says, i.e. there is no more room on the disc, and you merely need to insert a clean, formatted disc to re-try. However, all is not always as it seems.

a) Computers do not necessarily save files sequentially onto discs, one tucked neatly behind or next to the other. This can create a situation where there is still space on the disc, but in such small 'chunks' over various sectors that there is effectively no room to save your file. It is good practice, once more than approx. fifteen files have been saved onto a disc, to compact it, i.e. sweep all the saved files together thus releasing the available space into one area.

Screen information at end of compacting



```
ACORN MOS
ACORN 1770 DFS
BASIC

>*COMPACT
Compacting : 0
$.!BOOT      L  000000  000000  000012 002
$.WS-CKF     L  FF0E00  FF802B  002285 003
$.WS-F       L  FF0E00  FF802B  0021A8 026
F.perfect       000000  FFFFFF  000794 048
F.compar        000000  FFFFFF  000798 050
F.pronoun       000000  FFFFFF  000794 058
F.negs          000000  FFFFFF  000796 060
F.adject        000000  FFFFFF  000797 068
F.vocab         000000  FFFFFF  000798 070
F.tr1p11        000000  000000  000798 078
F.tr1p15        000000  000000  00079C 080
F.tr1p20        000000  000000  000798 088
F.tr1p49        000000  000000  000792 090
F.tr1p50        000000  FFFFFF  000792 098
F.lan1          FFFFFF  FFFFFF  000794 0A0
278 free sectors
>
```

Put the disc into drive 0: Type *COMPACT 0 (RETURN)
All the file names will appear on screen, one after the other, and at the end you will be told how much space is left.

Once the latter message reads 0000, then obviously the disc really is full, and you need to move onto a new disc.

b) You will be unable to save a file if you give it too long a name: seven letters maximum.

c) If you are working with a word processor resident in your machine, check that the disc drive is set to the right track for the disc.

3. Keyboard malfunction

Keys do go dead occasionally, i.e. you press a key and there is no response. Like any other machine, this is an indication of wear and tear. If the whole keyboard goes dead, then the keyboard/machine needs a service. Sometimes it can be a simple matter of the key prop having slipped underneath. This is a fairly straightforward repair.

4. A program won't load or function properly

If you have changed to a second or third program in one session without clearing the computer's memory, it will, not surprisingly, get overfull.

a) Clear the memory in-between each program by holding down the control key CTRL and pressing BREAK.

b) If this does not work, then remove disc/s from the disc drive and switch the machine off. Wait five seconds and switch on again.

c) Remember to exit from programs properly. If you don't, then the computer's memory is still holding instructions partly carried out and will be waiting for further instructions (see below).

5. Existing procedures

Pupils are quick to pick up basic procedures and then tend to mis-use them. E.g. they soon learn that the BREAK key is a quick exit from programs. However, unless so specified by the program, this should not be used. Similar mis-use is made of the ESCAPE key.

a) Make sure pupils use the correct exit procedure from each program.

b) Only allow them to use CTRL/BREAK once the cursor has returned to the screen having exited from a program.

c) Emphasise that they should not use the BREAK key half-way through a program. If they wish to change to a different file/program, then they should follow the screen/booklet instructions.

d) Some programs actually make use of the BREAK key, e.g. on *Fun with texts* it returns you safely to the main menu, from which you can then exit. If you change from a program like this to another without this procedure during one lesson, make sure pupils are aware that the same procedure no longer applies.

6. Printer not functioning properly

Some programs contain their own printer commands, which effectively switch off the 'default' (normal) settings. If you proceed to a second program, you may still have uncancelled printer commands in memory.

a) If a printer does not function properly, i.e. it starts sending sheets of paper through or it prints over and over on one line, then switch the printer off. Leave for five seconds, then try again.

b) If it still doesn't work, check that someone hasn't moved the dip switches from their default setting. It is a good ideas to write these down on a sticky label and place on the printer by the dip switches, so you can check quickly without having to refer to the handbook (see p 47).

c) Make as little use of the handle/knob as possible. To line up paper horizontally, put the printer off-line by touching the on/off-line switch or pad. The light on this pad should then go out. You can now use the two other pads to:

either advance one whole page = form feed;
or advance a line at a time = line feed.

If you press the two other pads, when the on-light is still on, you will find that you may well have changed the character font and that your printout has altered style. Familiarise yourself with the options of these three control pads so that you can make correct use of them.

7. TV/Monitor not functioning properly

The nastiest of all tricks that the 'wise-guys' among pupils (or teachers?) can pull is to fiddle with the contrast button on the TV or monitor. It is so easy to remove all white light, presenting a perfectly blank screen to baffle the next person who comes along! So if the screen is blank:

a) Check that it is switched on.

b) Check that the contrast has not been turned right down.

c) Check that the lead to the computer is still firmly connected.

d) If you have a picture on screen, but the colours are not normal, then it is most likely that the RGB lead has been damaged. As the colours are sent separately through the pins, any damage to any one pin will result in a non-transference of that colour. If all pins have been damaged - by rough removal from socket or being jammed on the wrong way - then no picture will appear. To test this, borrow a second lead and try with that one.

The constant removing and re-inserting of printer/disc drive/Concept Keyboard connections and monitor/modem leads will only increase the likelihood of damage. A very good reason, as stated previously, to plead for a trolley so that the whole work station can be moved around without risking unnecessary wear and tear.

Final hint

Whenever you tackle something new, you have to pass through all the same painful procedures - feeling inept, feeling gauche, making elementary mistakes, not knowing how to handle a problem, not knowing what step to take next.

Anticipate that you will go through all these stages and know that everyone felt just the same when they started. The most important thing is NOT TO WORRY. It is most unlikely that you will damage either the machine or the program, if things do go wrong.

The best advice if and when you really are stuck is to exit, if you can, from the program, remove the disc, switch off the machine, go away and have a cup of coffee and come back when you feel like it.

The next best advice is to have a 'troubleshooter' friend or colleague, whom you can contact at any time for help or just words of reassurance.

CHAPTER 6

What else?

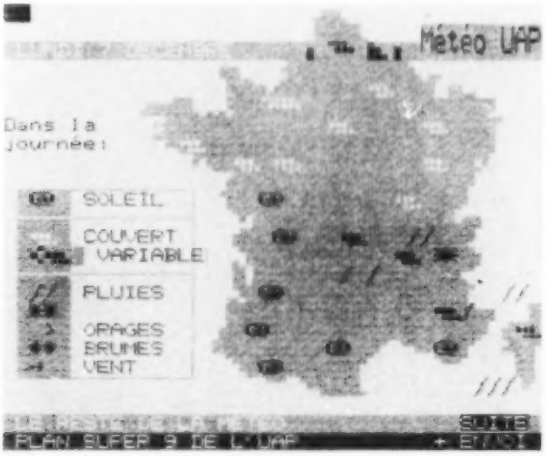
Not every school will be able to provide each department with equal or regular access to computers. Some disciplines will be able to integrate IT successfully into their syllabus; others may have to content themselves with the occasional IT project.

Newspaper Days have become increasingly popular in both primary and secondary sectors. Usually produced during an off-timetable day, the content of the finished product reflects all areas of the curriculum - maths quizzes, historical reports, environmental studies, personal stories and musings, poems, etc. There is every opportunity here for the modern language department to contribute - either a section or a whole paper, whether mono- or multi-lingual.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

One LEA has already run a foreign language newspaper competition, to which every secondary school submitted copy, and they intend to make it an annual event.

The newspaper is created using a DTP (Desk Top Publishing) package, if available, or a 'cut and paste' system, if not. Pupils prepare some material in advance of publication day - questionnaires, surveys, stories, or reports; other material is gathered 'hot off the line' on the day itself, using whatever resources are available - foreign radio or satellite broadcasts, E-mail or a local firm's fax machine to contact exchange schools aboard. DATASTAR, the international on-line database mentioned in the Information Retrieval section, could be a tremendous asset here, offering as it does E-mail, today's headlines and news and a wealth of archived material backdated to 1984 in both French and German. Weather maps downloaded from TELETEL would add a touch of authenticity to the production. One day's use of such systems will not 'break the bank' and will give pupils a taste of the potential of such sources.



For modern language teachers without IT skills there is initially one great advantage - they do not have to be in charge of the technology! The IT co-ordinator, sometimes an IT adviser as well, is on hand to direct the actual DTP (Desk Top Publishing) work.

We are always recommending to our pupils that they should learn by doing. If we take our own advice, this kind of project could give us the training we need. And when we arrive at the stage when we ourselves are feeling competent, we can devise our own departmental projects using the same IT:

★ producing a *What's On* brochure for the local area for foreign tourists, perhaps on a regular weekly/fortnightly basis during the last half of the summer term;

★ producing a school brochure for exchange schools, describing the school, its environment and its daily routine;

★ producing brief language guides for local businesses, such as hotels, garages and restaurants, for the benefit of both staff and foreign visitors;

★ producing in-house foreign language reading material.

Whatever the content, the professional appearance of the finished product greatly stimulates the pupils to produce equally 'professional' work. Who knows, you may even strike on a product that can make money!

The immediacy of E-mail and Fax recommend themselves to this kind of project. By narrowing their use down to a day's or maybe a week's project, their cost is also limited. Schools with active exchange partners abroad may find that they open up new avenues of contact which can add a spur to even the most disaffected of pupils.

If cost seems to be prohibitive, remember that many local businesses may well have these facilities and be willing to act as a host for a short time - a very positive, yet limited amount of sponsorship that could prove beneficial to both parties.

Other developments worth following include the Olympus satellite project. Since January 1990 the European Space Agency's Olympus satellite is broadcasting annually 3,000 hours of educational programmes across Europe. The programmes span the entire curriculum. Some are being transmitted with multi-lingual sound tracks, making a geography programme from the UK or Germany equally usable to the modern languages or geography departments. It is hoped that in the near future data will be simultaneously transmitted. This means that you will be able to record not only the video programme itself but also download exercises, worksheets and backup material directly onto disc - an exciting development that is well worth watching.

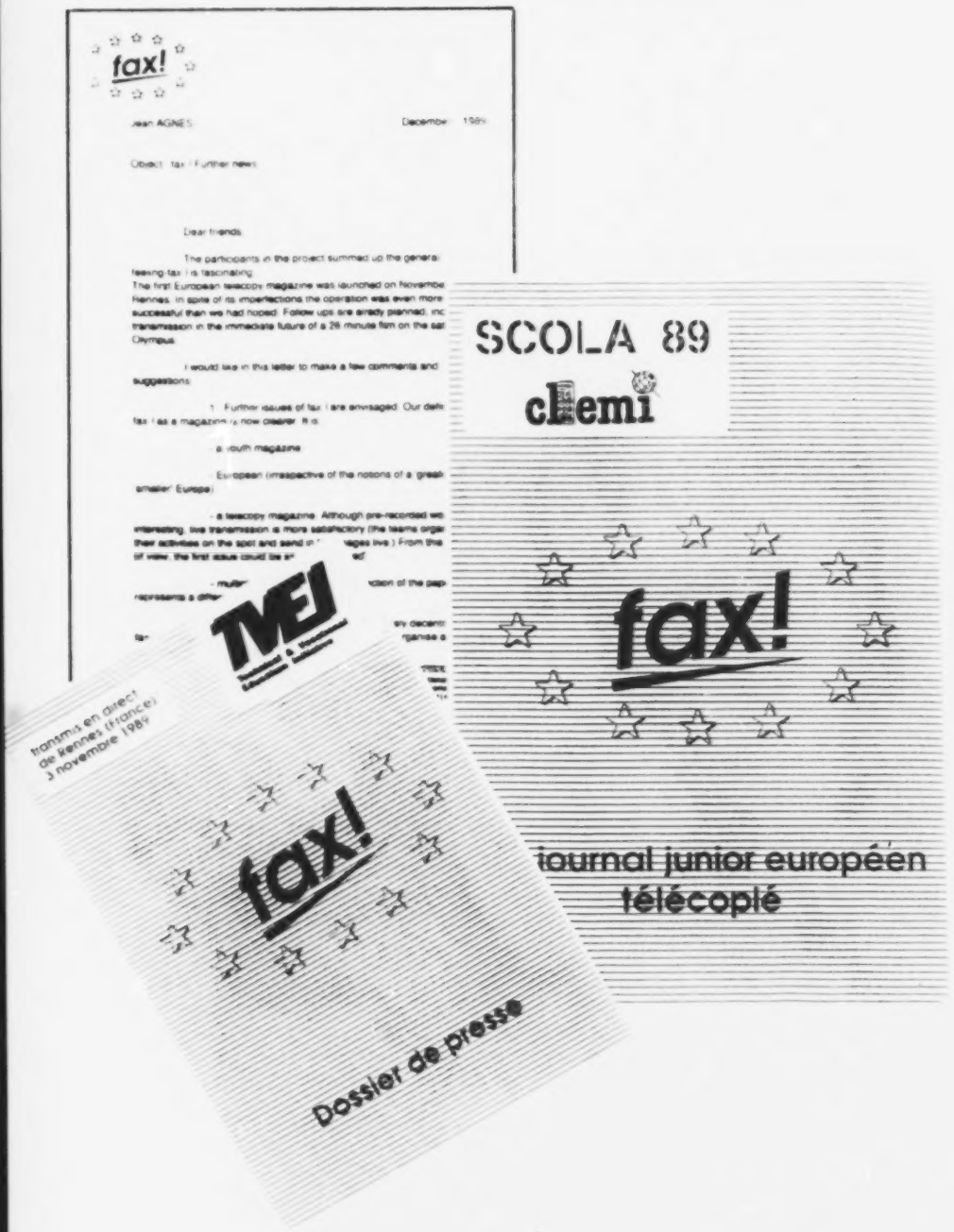
The 'languages for all' policy of the National Curriculum and the potential need for language qualifications in all walks of business following 1992, have spawned and are continuing to spawn new syllabuses and modules for pupils in the post-14 and 16 stages. Many of these contain a strong IT element - word processing, E-mail, accessing databases, role-play simulations.

Already on the market - but at prices that preclude use except in the most favoured circumstances - are CD-ROM discs. In France, in yet another typical technological quantum leap, publishers are already producing CD-ROMs which hold the contents of up to seven dictionaries, including thesauri and scientific data. Soon the contents of complete encyclopaedias will be accessible on one disc. There is a move to support the introduction of such material with its equipment into every school over there. Hopefully, as the technology develops, prices will fall and we too will be able to make use of such material.

Another book in this series, *Making the most of satellites and interactive video*, points to yet another way ahead - the interactive video disc. This and the CD-ROM disc have the potential to offer pupils new learning situations, hardly dreamt of a few short years ago but which are already being exploited by business training departments.

IT is no longer the preserve of the enthusiast. It is part and parcel of the world around us. Within a few years it will also be part and parcel of school life. If we are to make full use of existing and potential sources of new skills and information, each of us will have to develop and expand our own technological skills. Pupils are now arriving in the secondary sector with considerable IT experience; we need to be able to exploit and build on their skills.

The European FAX project 1989



GLOSSARY

ADFS	Advanced Disc Filing System: used by the Acorn BBC Compact, Master and Archimedes computers; permits directory building with storage of files in sub-directories. As opposed to DFS.
ALT key	Stands for Alternative key: found on PCs and Nimbus 286s, by pressing the Alt key and typing in a number accented vowels and consonants can be created on screen and in printout. The ALT key numbers will be given in the computer manual. On Apple Macs the Alt key and other combinations similarly produce accents.
authoring programs	Programs which have no text or content. Teachers/pupils write their own and save it as a file. Differentiated files can be created on the same topic. The main program will offer a variety of programs that will manipulate or test the content.
backup disc	All discs are liable to damage (corruption). For obvious reasons it makes sense to have a copy of all your files just in case. This is known as a backup copy. Many software houses permit the creation of a backup copy of a master disc. If this is not possible because they have protected it so it cannot be copied, then your only course of action, if the master disc corrupts, is to return it to the software house. Having backup copies of all your discs is expensive and should be budgeted for. If you really cannot afford to duplicate all your discs, then at least a) have paper copy of any texts/word processed files and b) copy those discs handled most frequently by pupils.
!BOOT	To 'boot' a program means to start it by holding down the SHIFT key and tapping the BREAK key. Only once the light on the disc drive comes on, should you release the SHIFT key.
CALL	Computer Assisted Language Learning, as opposed to the more general term CAL = Computer Assisted Learning; also known as CALI and CAI = Computer Assisted Language Instruction and Computer Assisted Instruction respectively (mainly USA).
CD-ROM	Compact Disc-Read Only Memory; these discs can store phenomenal amounts of information - c 80,000 A4 sides. The CD-ROM player is attached to the computer and reads the disc onto the screen. Already much used for dictionaries and works of reference.

cluster

A group of single stand-alone machines.

compact

a) to compact a disc: to move all files together so as to release clear space on the disc.

b) a version of the Acorn BBC computer using ADFS and 3½ inch discs.

compatible

Compatibility between machines is a recurrent headache for IT co-ordinators. All international standard PCs are compatible, a fact reflected in the price of the software. However, there can be substantial differences between a range of computers from one manufacturer. Do not take it for granted, for example, that programs written for the BBC B will automatically run on a Master, especially if the Master is running ADFS. Accents in particular can be lost or need re-configuring. In some cases software may need minor re-programming.

You are not allowed to run programs designed for one type of machine on another, even though there may be an emulator to facilitate this. Only your own written text files can be passed through an emulator - not a commercially produced program. If your new machine is not compatible with your old machine, you will just have to re-purchase the software.

crash/crash out

When a program comes to stand still or aborts itself. Usually the fault of poor programming, it can occur if wrong keys (or wrong combinations of keys) are pressed. If it happens, don't worry; try re-starting the program. If it happens continuously, the fault could be either the program itself - the disc could be damaged - or the hardware. Try the disc on another computer to work out which. If the disc is faulty, return it to the software house, if a security backup is not available for just such circumstances.

dedicated programs

Programs whose content is fixed and cannot be altered or added to.

DFS

Disc Filing System: the first computers loaded information from tape; then disc filing systems were introduced; existing computers were upgraded by the insertion of a DFS chip onto the computer board; now all computers (excluding those for the home market) will have a disc filing system of some sort.

disc/disk

Now in 2 sizes; a 5¼" 'floppy' disc or a 3½" disc.
BBC Bs run on 5¼" discs: a Master can run on either; an A3000 runs on 3½" discs, as does the RM Nimbus.
PCs can run on either, although most latest models have gone for the 3½" disc.

disc drive	The machine that picks up a program from a disc and feeds it into the computer. BBC Bs and Masters using 5¼" discs can have either 40 or 80 switchable track drives, the difference being whether the disc you are using has been formatted for 40 or for 80 tracks (similar in concept to the difference between a 45rpm and 33rpm record). Disc drives can be either single or double.
dip switches	Small switches located inside a printer; by changing combinations, various effects can be achieved, i.e. reduced print and, importantly, international character sets. Most programs needing accents in printout will have any change needed written into the program; some word processors allow control codes to be entered and so the dip switches do not have to be manually adjusted.
DTP	Desk Top Publishing package; used to produce newspapers, posters, brochures, broadsheets, they offer a wide range of fonts (shapes of letters)and sizes. They range from the simple to the professional, a fact reflected in their purchase price.
E-Mail	Electronic mail: potentially of enormous importance to ML departments. The computer is linked via a modem down a telephone line to a mailing system, which allows messages to be sent rapidly all over the world. Some schools in Europe are supplied with the necessary hardware; others are not.
format	A disc straight from its box is blank. Before it can be used to 'capture' information, i.e. a program or a file, it has to be formatted. For details, see the computer's users' manual.
hardware	The computer, VDU (visual display unit) or screen and disc drive. Printers, Concept Keyboards etc are known as peripherals.
IT	Information Technology: no longer a single subject but a cross-curricular skills-based discipline.
licence	Software houses sell software under various agreements; the usual price given for a piece of software is that for use on a single machine. If you wish to use it on more than one machine (stand-alone) than you must purchase a multi-user licence or a site licence. If you are going to use it on the network, then you must have a network licence. In either case you will have to tell the software house on how many machines you intend running the program.

Some software houses include site/network licences in the price, but expect to have to pay more for the program.

modem — A device that allows a computer to be connected to a telephone socket and enables the computer to link in to national or international on-line databases or E-Mail systems.

MS-DOS — MicroSoft - Disc Operating System: the disc filing system standard to IBM computers; the larger Archimedes and Nimbus machines can also run this system.

Most international standard programs are written for MS-DOS or are compatible. The only exceptions are the Apple computers.

network — Single computers can be connected by cable leading to and from a file server which houses a hard disc storing many different programs. Each computer can then access one or any of these programs simultaneously; of obvious benefit if 10 or more computers are in the same room, as a whole class can work at the same time and more than one program can be used during the lesson.

PC — Personal Computer; used to identify international standard machines; from IBM PC, now found on many machines known as PC compatible.

peripherals — Equipment such as printers and Concept Keyboards that can be attached to computers; they are not considered essential to the running of a program (see hardware).

software — Discs containing programs for a computer. Ten years ago many computers ran off tape software - the home/game market still does - however, the introduction of affordable disc drives some years ago saw the virtual end of tape software in the school market. Software houses offer catalogues, just like publishing houses. It is preferable to see a program running before purchasing; contact your local IT centre and spend some time looking at possible software.

tools — Refers to programs such as word processors, spread sheets, databases, desk top publishing packages, all of which are merely 'tools' for doing a specific job.

verify — Your formatting disc should contain a program which will check whether your disc is 'clean' or whether a fault has developed.
BBC Masters and Archimedes have a built-in formatting/ backup/verify system.

USEFUL ADDRESSES

CILT
Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, Regent's College, Regent's Park, London, NW1 4NS. Tel: 071 486 8221

MAPE
Micros & Primary Education: contact: Ms G Jones, The Old Vicarage, Skegby Road, Normanton on Trent, Notts NG23 6RR. Tel: 0636 821647

Software: Technology Centre, Newman College, Jenners Lane, Birmingham B32 3NT. Tel: 021 476 1181 ext 271

NCCALL
National Centre for Computer Assisted Language Learning, The Director, Ealing College, 1 The Grove, London W5 5DX. Tel: 081 579 4111

NCET
The Information Officer, Modern languages, National Council for Educational Technology, Sir Williams Lyons Road. Science Park, University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7EZ. Tel: 0203 416994

RLDU
Resources for Learning Development Unit, Bishop Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 8LS.

Software houses
For a complete and up-to-date list of software houses, contact Roger Blamire at NCET (see above).

RECOMMENDED READING

(1986) *CALL for the computer* Computer Assisted Language Learning for the Modern Language Teacher, BALT/MLA.

(1990) *Educational technology in modern language learning*, Training Agency report.

(1989) *Information technology from 5-16*, HMSO, an HMI series.

(1988) *Learning languages with technology*, NCET.

Sue Hewer (1989) *Making the most of IT skills* in the series TECHNOLOGY IN LANGUAGE LEARNING, CILT.

(1990) *Modern languages, a guide for schools* in the Nimbus in Education series, RM Nimbus.

Further reading

Reviews of software and articles on classroom application appear in:

The Times Educational Supplement, Computers/IT page; see also Modern Language EXTRA twice a year.

The ALL Journal (see also back copies of the British Journal for Language Teaching and the Modern Languages Journal).

CALLBOARD from NCCALL

Articles by practitioners - mostly HE - can be found in:

Keith Cameron (ed) (1986) *Computers and modern language studies*, Ellis Horwood Ltd.

Douglas Hainline (ed) (1987) *New developments in computer assisted language learning* Croom Helm.

A reading list is also available free of charge from: CILT Library, Regent's College, Inner Circle, Regent's Park, London NW1 4NS. Please send a large SAE requesting CILT Information 13.

APPENDIX

Accessing the international character sets on an Epson printer

Use the following keys when writing with Edword, View, Wordwise, Interword to print out the following accents on an EPSON printer:

	{	}	[	]	¦	\	@	~
Fr	é	è			ù	ç	à	
Gr	ä	ü	Ä	Ü	ö	Ö		ß
Sp			¡	¿	ñ	Ñ		

Note: There are no circumflex accents on these international character sets!

To access these sets you can either:

a) change the dip switches in the printer;

or

b) with some word processors you can enter control codes into the word processing program itself.

a) The dip switches are positioned in two rows, one of 8 (SW1) and one of 4 (SW2). The final 3 on the row of 8 can be moved up or down to access accents for the following countries. NB: UK Set gives a pound sign.

	SW1-6	SW1-7	SW1-8
French	Up	Up	Down
German	Up	Down	Up
Spanish	Down	Down	Down
UK	Up	Down	Down

b) Control Codes facility: enter the following codes to accesss the correct set of accents

French	27,82,1
German	27,82,2
UK	27,82,3
UK	27,82,7

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NB: In Interword the key used for 'u' grave and 'o' umlaut is already assigned as the pad character. This has to be changed before the full range of accents can be printed.

Step 1 > fO
Step 2 > 5 for printer setup
Step 3 > highlight pad character with cursor and delete using COPY key
Step 4 > type in another sign not being used e.g. dollar sign
Step 5 > press RETURN and then ESCAPE

ALT key numbers

Hold down the ALT key and type in number on number keypad to create accented vowel/letter on screen.

é	130	ä	132	á	160	å	134
è	138	ö	148	é	130	Å	143
à	133	ü	129	í	161	õ	148
ù	151	Ä	142	ó	162	Ö	153
ç	135	Ö	153	ú	163	ü	129
â	131	Ü	154	ñ	164	Ü	154
ê	136	ß	225	Ñ	165	à	133
î	140			¿	168	è	138
ô	147			¡	173	ì	141
û	150			Pt.	158	ò	149
ë	137	¼	171			ù	151
Ç	128	£	156				

NOTES

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ISBN 0 948003 29 4

This book aims to provide modern language teachers who have still to take their first steps in integrating IT into their methodology with a guide to various applications which could make useful starting points. In addition, hints and suggestions are given about what questions to ask when acquiring a computer and buying software and how to avoid some of the problems that teachers may well face when starting out.

There are also lists of further sources of information and extra reading, as well as a glossary of terms used.

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